

T R A V E L

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE.

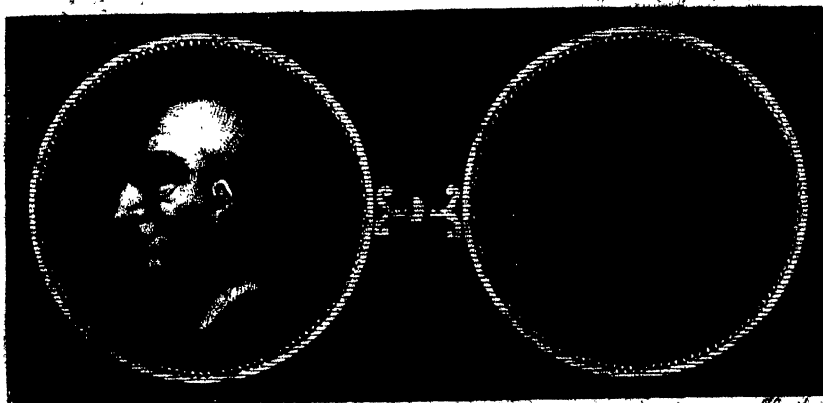
TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

SOURCE OF THE NILE,

In the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773.

BY JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F.R.S.



VOL. II.

*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi, sed omnes illechyrymabiles
Urgenter ignotique longæ
Noctæ, carent quia vate sacro.*

HORAT.

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C O N T E N T S

OF THE

S E C O N D V O L U M E.

B O O K III.

A N N A L S O F A B Y S S I N I A.

Translated from the Original.

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIANS, FROM
THE RESTORATION OF THE LINE OF SOLOMON TO THE
DEATH OF SOCINIOS, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE RO-
MAN RELIGION.

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SOCINIOS, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE ROMISH RELIGION.

I C O N A M L A C.

From 1258 to 1283.

Line of Solomon restored under this Prince—He continues the Royal Residence in Shoa—Tecla Haimanout dies—Reasons for the Fabrication of the supposed Nicene Canon.

ALTHOUGH the multiplicity of names assumed by the kings of Abyssinia, and the confusion occasioned by this custom, has more than once been complained of in the foregoing sheets, we have here a prince that is an exception

to this practice, otherwise almost general. Icon Amlac is the only name by which we know this first prince of the race of Solomon, restored now fully to his dominions, after a long exile his family had suffered by the treason of Judith. The signification of his name is, "Let him be made our sovereign," and is apparently that which he took upon his inauguration or accession to the throne; and his name of baptism, and bye-name or popular name given him, are both therefore lost.

ALTHOUGH now restored to the complete possession of his ancient dominions, he was too wise all at once to leave his dutiful kingdom of Shoa and return to Tigré. He continued to make Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, his seat of the empire, and there reigned fifteen years.

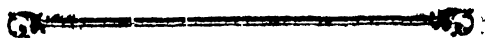
IN the 14th year of the reign of this prince, his great benefactor, Abuna Tecla Haimanout, founder of the Order of Monks of Debra Libanos, and restorer of the Royal family, died at that monastery in great reputation and very advanced age. He was the last Abyssinian ordained Abuna; and this sufficiently shews the date of that canon I have already spoken of, falsely said to be a canon of the council of Nicea.

THOUGH Le Grande and some others have pretended to be in doubt at what time, and for what reason, this canon could have been made, I think the reason very plain, which fixes it to the time of Tecla Haimanout, as well as shews it to be a forgery of the church of Alexandria, no doubt with the council and advice of this great statesman Tecla Haimanout. Egypt was fallen under the dominion of the

Saracens ; the Coptic patriarch, and all the Christians of the church of Alexandria, were their slaves or servants ; but the Abyssinians were free and independent, both in church and state, and a mortal hatred had followed the conquest from variety of causes, of which the persecution of the Christians in Egypt was not one of the least. As it was probable that these reasons would increase daily, the consequence which promised inevitably to follow was, that the Abyssinians would not apply to Alexandria, or Cairo, for a metropolitan sent by the Mahometans, but would choose a head of their own, and so become independent altogether of the chair of St Mark. As they were cut off from the rest of the world by seas and deserts almost inaccessible, as they wanted books, and were every day relaxing in discipline, total ignorance was likely to follow their separation from their primitive church, and this could not end but in a relapse into Paganism, or in their embracing the religion of Mahomet.

THIS prohibition of making any of their countrymen Abuna, secured them always a foreigner, and a man of foreign education and attachments, to fill the place of Abuna, and by this means assured the dependence of the Abyssinians upon the patriarch of Alexandria. This is what I judge probable, for I have already invincibly shewn, that it is impossible this canon could be one of the first general Council ; and its being in Arabic, and conceived in very barbarous terms, sufficiently evinces that it was forged at this period.

TRAVELS TO DISCOVER



I G B A S I O N .

From 1283 to 1312.

Quick Succession of Princes—Memoirs of these Reigns deficient.

TO Icon Amlac succeeded Igba Sion, and after him five other princes, his brothers, Bahar Segued, Tzenaf Segued, Jan Segued, Haseb Araad, and Kedem Segued, all in five years. So quick a succession in so few years seems to mark very unsettled times. Whether it was a civil war among themselves that brought these reigns to so speedy a conclusion, or whether it was that the Moorish states in Adel had grown in power, and fought successfully against them, we do not know. One thing only we are certain of, that no molestation was offered by the late royal family of Lasta, who continued in peace, and firm in the observation of their treaty. I therefore am inclined to think, that a civil war among the brothers was the occasion of the quick succession of so many princes ; and that in the time when the kingdom was weakened by this calamity, the states of Adel, grown rich and powerful, had improved the occasion, and seized upon all that territory from Azab to Melinda, and cut off the Abyssinians entirely from the sea-coast, and from an opportunity of trading directly with India from the ports situated upon the ocean. And my reason is, that, in a reign which speedily follows, we find the kingdom of Adel

Adel increased greatly in power, and Moorish princes from Arabia established in little principalities, exactly corresponding with the southern limits of Abyssinia, and placed between them and the ocean ; and we see, at the same time, a rancour and hatred firmly rooted in the breasts of both nations, one of the causes of which is constantly alledged by the Abyssinian princes to be, that the Moors of Adel were anciently their subjects and vassals, had withdrawn themselves from their allegiance, and owed their present independence to rebellion only.

To these princes succeeded Wedem Araad, their youngest brother, who reigned fifteen years, probably in peace, for in this state we find the kingdom in the days of his successor ; but then it is such a peace that we see it only wanted any sort of provocation from one party to the other, for both to break out into very cruel, long, and bloody wars.



A M D A S I O N.

From 1312 to 1342.

Licentious beginning of this King's Reign—His rigorous Conduct with the Monks of Debra Libanos—His Mahometan Subjects rebel—Maria and Adel declare War—Are defeated in several Battles, and submit.

A M D A Sion succeeded his father, Wedem Araad, who was youngest brother of Icon Amlac, and came to the crown upon the death of his uncles. He is generally known by

by this his inauguration name; his Christian name was Guebra Mafcal. His reign began with a scene as disgraceful to the name of Christian as it was new in the annals of Ethiopia, and which promised a character very different from what this prince preserved ever afterwards. He had for a time, it seems, privately loved a concubine of his father, but had now taken her to live with him publicly; and, not content with committing this sort of incest, he, in a very little time after, had seduced his two sisters.

TEGULAT * (the capital of Shoa) was then the royal residence; and near it the monastery of Debra Libanos, founded by Tecla Haimanout restorer of the line of Solomon. To this monastery many men, eminent for learning and religion, had retired from the scenes of war that desolated Palestine and Egypt. Among the number of these was one Honorius, a Monk of the first character for piety, who, since, has been canonized as a saint. Honorius thought it his duty first to admonish, and then publicly excommunicate the king for these crimes.

It should seem that patience was as little among this prince's virtues as chastity, as he immediately ordered Honorius to be apprehended, stripped naked, and severely whipped through every street of his capital. That same night the town took fire, and was entirely consumed, and the clergy lost no time to persuade the people, that it was the blood of Honorius that turned to fire whenever it had dropt upon the ground, and so had burnt the city. The king,

* The city of Wolves, or Hyznas.

king, perhaps better informed, thought otherwise of this, and supposed the burning of his capital was owing to the Monks themselves. He therefore banished those of Debra Libanos out of the province of Shoa. The mountain of Geshen had been chosen for the prison wherein to guard the princes of the male-line of the race of Solomon, after the massacre by Esther *, upon the rock Damo in Tigré.

GESHEN is a very steep and high rock, in the kingdom of Amhara, adjoining to, and under the jurisdiction of Shoa. Hither the king sent Philip the Itchegué, chief of the monastery of Debra Libanos, and he scattered the rest through Dembea, Tigré, and Begemder, (whose inhabitants were mostly Pagans and Jews), where they greatly propagated the knowledge of the Christian religion.

THIS instance of severity in the king had the effect to make all ranks of people return to their duty; and all talk of Honorius and his miracles was dropt. The town was rebuilt speedily, more magnificently than ever, and Amda Sion found time to turn his thoughts to correct those abuses, to efface the unfavourable impression which they had made upon the minds of his people at home, and which, besides, had gained considerable ground abroad.

It has been before mentioned, and will be further inculcated in the course of this history as a fact, without the remembrance of which the military expeditions of Abyssinia cannot be well understood, that two opposite seasons prevail

* She had several names, as I have before said, *Judith* in Tigré, and in Amhara *Efther*.

prevail in countries separated by a line almost imperceptible; that during our European winter months, that is, from October to March, the winter or rainy season prevails on the coast of the ocean and Red Sea, but that these rains do not fall in our summer, (the rainy season in Abyssinia), which was the reason why Amda Sion said to his mutinous troops, he would lead them to Adel or Auffa, where it did not rain, as we shall presently observe.

THE different nations that dwell along the coast, both of the Red Sea and of the ocean, live in fixed huts or houses. We shall begin at the northmost, or nearest Atbara. The first is Ageeg, so named from a small island on the coast, opposite to the mountains of the Habab, Agag, or Agaazi, the principal district of the noble or governing Shepherds, as is before fully explained, different in colour and hair from the Shepherds of the Thebaid living to the northward. Then follow the different tribes of these, Tora, Shiho, Taltal, Azimo, and Azabo, where the Red Sea turns eastward, towards the Straits, all woolly-headed, the primitive carriers of Saba, and the perfume and gold country. Then various nations inhabit along the ocean, all native blacks, remnants of the Cushite Troglodyte, but who do not change their habitations with the seasons, but live within land in caves, and some of them now in houses.

IN Adel and Auffa the inhabitants are tawny, and not black, and have long hair; they are called Gibbertis, which some French writers of voyages into this country say, mean Slaves, from Guebra, the Abyssinian word for slave or servant. But as it would be very particular that a nation like these, so rich and so powerful, who have made themselves

independent of their ancient masters the Abyssinians, have wrested so many provinces from them, and, from the difference of their faith, hold them in such utter contempt, should nevertheless be content to call themselves their slaves, so nothing is more true, than that this name of Gibberti has a very different import. Jabber, in Arabic, the word from which it is derived, signifies the *faith*, or the *true faith*; and Gibberti consequently means the *faithful*, or the *orthodox*, by which name of *bonour* these moors, inhabiting the low country of Abyssinia, call each other, as being constant in their faith amidst Christians with whom they are at perpetual war.

THERE is no current coin in Abyssinia. Gold is paid by weight; all the revenues are chiefly paid in kind, viz. oxen, sheep, and honey, which are the greatest necessities of life. As for luxuries, they are obtained by a barter of gold, myrrh, coffee, elephants teeth, and a variety of other articles which are carried over to Arabia; and in exchange for these is brought back whatever is commissioned.

EVERY great man in Abyssinia has one of these Gibbertis for his factor. The king has many, who are commonly the shrewdest and most intelligent of their profession. These were the first inhabitants of Abyssinia, whom commerce connected with the Arabians on the other side of the Straits of Babelmandeb, with whom they intermarry, or with one another, which preserves their colour and features, resembling both the Abyssinians and Arabians. In Arabia, they are under the protection of some of their own countrymen, who being sold when young as slaves, are brought up in the Mahometan religion, and enjoy all the principal posts

under the Sherriffe of Mecca and the Arabian princes. These are the people who at particular times have appeared in Europe, and who have been straightway taken for, and treated as Ambassadors.

More southward and westward are the kingdoms of Mara, Worgla, and Pagoma, small principalities of fixed habitations by the sea, at times free, at others dependent upon Adel; and, to the south of these, in the same flat country, is Hadea, whose capital is Harar, and governed by a prince, who is a Gibberti likewise; and who, by marrying a Sherriffa, or female descendant of Mahomet, is now reckoned a Sherriffe or noble of Mahomet's family, distinguished by his wearing habits, for the most part green, and above all a grass-green turban, a mark of hatred to Christianity.

The Gibbertis, then, are the princes and merchants of this country, converted to the Mahometan faith soon after the death of Mahomet, when the Baharnagash (as we have already stated) revoked from the empire of the Abyssinians, in whose hands all the riches of the country are centered. The black inhabitants are only their subjects, hewers of wood and drawers of water, who serve them in their families at home, take care of their camels when employed in caravans abroad, and who make the principal part of their forces in the field.

But there are other inhabitants still besides these Gibbertis and native blacks, whom we must not confound with the indigenous of this country, how much soever they may resemble them. The first of these are by the Portuguese historians called *Moor*s, who are merchants from the west of Africa.

Africa. Many of these, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, fixed their residence here, and were afterwards joined by others of their Moorish brethren, either exiles from Spain, or inhabitants of Morocco, whom the desire of commerce induced first to settle in Arabia, till the great oppressions that followed the conquest of Egypt and Arabia, under Selim and Soliman, interrupted their trade, and scattered them here along the coast. These are the Moors that Vasques de Gama* met at Mombaza, Magadoxa, and Melinda; at all places, but the last of which, they endeavoured to betray him. These also were the Moors that he found in India, having no profession but trade, in every species of which they excelled.

THE fourth sort are Arabian merchants, who come over occasionally to recover their debts, and renew correspondences with the merchants of this country. These are the richest of all, and are the bankers of the Gibbertis, who furnish them funds and merchandise, with which they carry on a most lucrative and extensive trade into the heart of Africa, through all the mountains of Abyssinia to the western sea, and through countries which are inaccessible to camels, where the ass, the mule, and, in some places, oxen, are the only beasts used in carriage.

THERE is a fifth sort, almost below notice, unless it is for the mischief they have constantly done their country; they are the Abyssinian apostates from Christianity, the most inveterate enemies it has, and who are employed chiefly as soldiers. While in that country they are not much esteem-

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ed,

* Conquestes de Portugais par Lafitau, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 90. Id. ibid. p. 144.

ed, though, when transported to India, they have constantly turned out men of confidence and trust, and the best troops those eastern nations have.

THERE is a sixth, still less in number than even these, and not known on this Continent till a few years before. These were the Turks who came from Greece and Syria, and who were under Selim, and Soliman his son, the instruments of the conquest of Egypt and Arabia; small garrisons of whom were everywhere left by the Turks in all the fortresses and considerable towns they conquered. They are an hereditary kind of militia, who, marrying each others daughters, or with the women of the country, continue from father to son to receive from Constantinople the same pay their forefathers had from Selim. These, though degenerate in figure and manners into an exact resemblance to the natives of the countries in which they since lived, do still continue to maintain their superiority by a constant skill and attention to fire-arms, which were, at the time of their first appearance here, little known or in use among either Abyssinians or Arabians, and the means of first establishing this preference.

It has been already observed, that the Mahometan Moors and Arabs possessed all the low country on the Indian Ocean, and opposite to Arabia Felix; and being, by their religion, obliged to go in pilgrimage to Mecca, as also by their sole profession, which was trade, they became, by consequence, the only carriers and directors of the commerce of Abyssinia. All the country to the east and north of Shoa was possessed and commanded chiefly by Mahometan merchants.

appointed by the king; and they had established a variety of marts or fairs from Ifat, all the way as far as Adel.

ADEL and Mara were two of the most powerful kingdoms which lie on the Indian Ocean; and, being constantly supported by foldiers from Arabia, were the first to withdraw themselves from obedience to the king of Abyssinia, and seldom paid their tribute unless when the prince came to raise it there with an army. Ifat, Fatigar, and Dawaro, were indeed originally Christian provinces; but, in weak reigns, having been ceded to Moorish governors for sums of money, they, by degrees, renounced both their religion and allegiance.

From what has been observed, the reader will conceive; that where it is said the king, from his capital in Shoa, marched down into Dawaro, Hadea, or Adel, that he then descended from the highest mountains down to the flat country on the level with the sea. That this country, from Hadea to Dawaro, having been the seat of war for ages, was, partly by the foldier for the use of the camp, partly by the husbandman for the necessaries of life, cleared of wood; where the water stood constantly in pools throughout the year; and, being all composed of fat black earth, which the torrents bring down from the rainy country of Abyssinia, was sown with millet and different kinds of grain in the driest ground; while, nearer the mountains, they pastured numerous herds of cattle. Notwithstanding, however, the country was possessed of these advantages, the climate was intensely hot, feverish, and unhealthy, and, for the most part, from these circumstances, fatal to strangers, and hated by the Abyssinians.

AGAIN,

Again, when it is said that the king had marched to Samhar, it is meant that he had passed this fruitful country, and is come to that part of the zone, or belt, (nearest the sea) composed of gravel; which, though it enjoys neither the water nor the fruitfulness of the black earth, is in a great measure free from its attendant diseases, and here the cities and towns are placed, while the crop, oxen, and cattle, are in the cultivated part near the mountains, which in the language of the country is called *Mazaga*, signifying *black mould*.

LASTLY, when he hears the army murmuring at being kept during the rainy season in the Kolla below, he is to remember, that all was cool, pleasant, and safe in Upper Abyssinia. The soldiers, therefore, languished for the enjoyment of their own families, without any other occupation but merriment, festivity, and every species of gratification that wine, and the free and uncontrolled society of the female-sex, could produce.

HAVING now sufficiently explained and described the various names and inhabitants, the situation, soil, and climate of those provinces about to be the theatre of the war, I shall proceed to declare the occasion of it, which was nothing more than the fruit of those prejudices which I have already said, the loose behaviour of the king in the beginning of his reign had produced among his neighbours, and the calamities which had enfeebled the kingdom in the preceding reigns.

It happened that one of those Moorish factors, whom I have already described, having in charge the commercial interests

interests of the king, had been assassinated and robbed in the province of Ifat, when the King was busied with Honorius and his Monks. Without complaining or expostulating, he suddenly assembled his troops, having ordered them to rendezvous at Shugura upon the frontiers, and, to shew his impatience for revenge, with seven * horsemen he fell upon the nearest Mahometan settlements, who were perfectly secure, and put all he found in his way to the sword without exception. Then placing himself at the head of his army, he marched, by a long day's journey, straight to Ifat, burning Hungura, Jadai, Kubat, Fadise, Calife, and Argai, towns that lye in the way, full of all sorts of valuable merchandise, and, finding no where a force assembled to oppose him, he divided his army into small detachments, sending them different ways, with orders to lay the whole countries, where they came, waste with fire and sword, while he himself remained in the camp to guard the spoil, the women, and the baggage.

THE Moors, astonished at this torrent of desolation, which so suddenly had broken out under a prince whom they had considered as immersed in pleasure, flew all to arms; and being informed that the king was alone, and scarcely had soldiers to guard his camp, they assembled in numbers under the command of Hak-eddin, governor of Ifat, who had before plundered and murdered the king's servant. They then determined to attack Amda Sion early in the morning, but luckily two of his detachments had returned to the camp to his assistance, and joined him the very night before.

IT

* It has been imagined that this number should be increased to seventy, but I have followed the text; there would be little difference in the rapidity of the action.

It was scarcely day when the Moors presented themselves; but, far from surprising the Abyssinians buried in sleep, they found the king with his army ranged in battle, who, without giving them time to recover from their surprise, attacked them in person with great fury; and singling out Dardar, brother to Hak-eddin, animating his men before the ranks, he struck him so violently with his lance that he fell dead among his horse's feet, in the sight of both armies; whilst the Abyssinian troops pressing every where briskly forward, the Moors took to flight, and were pursued with great slaughter into the woods and fastnesses.

AFTER this victory, the king ordered his troops to build huts for themselves, at least such as could not find houses ready built. He ordered, likewise, a great tract of land contiguous to be plowed and sown, meaning to intimate, that his intention was to stay there with his army all the rainy season.

THE Mahometans, from this measure, if it should be carried into execution, saw nothing but total extirpation before their eyes; they, therefore, with one consent, submitted to the tribute imposed upon them; and the king having removed Hak-eddin, placed his brother Saber-eddin in his stead, and the rainy season being now begun, dismissed his army, and returned to Tegulat in Shoa.

THOUGH the personal gallantry of the king was a quality sufficient of itself to make him a favourite of the soldiers, his liberality was not less; all the plunder got by his troops in the field was faithfully divided among those who had fought for him; nor did he ever pretend to a share him-

self, unless on occasions when he was engaged in person, and then he shared upon an equal footing with the principal officers.

WHEN returned to the capital, he shewed the same disinterestedness and generosity which he had done in the field, and he distributed all he had won for his share among the great men, whom the necessary duties of government had obliged to remain at home, as also amongst the poor, and priests for the maintenance of churches; and, as well by this, as by his zeal and activity against the enemies of Christianity, he became the greatest favourite of all ranks of the clergy, notwithstanding the unpromising appearances at the beginning of his reign.

THE rainy season in Abyssinia generally puts an end to the active part of war, as every one retires then to towns and villages to screen themselves from the inclemency of the climate, deluged now with daily rain. The soldier, the husbandman, and, above all, the women, dedicate this season to continued festivity and riot. These villages and towns are always placed upon the highest mountains. The valleys that intervene are soon divided by large and rapid torrents. Every hollow foot-path becomes a stream, and the valleys between the hills become so miry as not to bear horse; and the waters, both deep and violent, are too apt to shift their direction to suffer any one on foot to pass safely. All this season, and this alone, people sleep in their houses in safety; their lances and shields are hung up on the sides of their hall, and their saddles and bridles taken off their horses; for in Abyssinia, at other times, the horses are always bridled, and are accustomed to eat and drink with this

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incumbrance. It is not, indeed, the same sort of bridle they use in the field, but a small bit of iron like our hunting-bridles, on purpose merely to preserve them in this habit. The court, and the principal officers of government, retire to the capital, and there administer justice, make alliances, and prepare the necessary funds and armaments, which the present exigencies of the state require on the return of fair weather.

AMDA SION was no sooner returned to Tegulat, than the Moors again entered into a conspiracy against him. The principal were Amano king of Hadea, Saber-eddin, whom the king had made governor of Fatigar, and privately, without any open declaration, Gimmel-eddin governor in Dawaro. But this conspiracy could not be hid from a prince of Amda Sion's vigilance and penetration. He concealed, however, any knowledge of the matter, lest it should urge the Moors to commence hostilities too early. He continued, therefore, with diligence, and without ostentation of any particular design, to make the ordinary preparations to take the field on the approaching season. This, however, did not impose upon the enemy. Whether from intelligence, or impatience of being longer inactive, Saber-eddin began the first hostilities, by surprising some Christian villages, and plundering and setting fire to the churches before the rains had yet entirely ceased.

THOSE that have written accounts of Abyssinia seem to agree in extolling the people of that country for giving no belief to the existence or reality of witchcraft or sorcery. Why they have fixed on this particular nation is hard to determine. But, as for me, I have no doubt in asserting, that there is not a barbarous or ignorant people that I ever knew of which
this

this can be truly said ; but certainly it never was less true than when said of Abyssinians. There is scarce a monk in any lonely monastery, (such as those in the hot and unwholesome valley of Waldubba), not a hermit of the many upon the mountains, not an old priest who has lived any time sequestered from society, that does not pretend to possess charms offensive and defensive, and several methods by which he can, at will, look into futurity. The Moors are all, to a man, persuaded of this : their arms and necks are loaded with amulets against witchcraft. Their women are believed to have all the mischievous powers of fascination ; and both sexes a hundred secrets of divination. The Falasha are addicted to this in still a greater degree, if possible. It is always believed by every individual Abyssinian, that the number of hyænas the smell of carrion brings into the city of Gondar every night, are the Falasha from the neighbouring mountains, transformed by the effect and for the purposes of enchantment. Even the Galla, a barbarous and stranger nation, hostile to the Abyssinians, and differing in language and religion, still agree with them in a hearty belief of the possibility of practising witchcraft, so as to occasion sickness and death at a very great distance, to blast the harvests, poison the waters, and render people incapable of propagating their species.

AMANO, king of Hadea, had one of these conjurers, who, by his knowledge of futurity, was famous among all the Mahometans of the low country. The king of Hadea himself had gone no further than to determine to rebel ; but whether he was to go up to fight with Amda Sion in Shoa, or whether greater success would attend his expecting him in Hadea, this was thought a doubt wholly with-

in the province of the conjurer, who assured Amano, his master, that if he did remain below, and wait for Amda Sion in Hadea, that prince would come down to him, and in one battle lose his kingdom and his life.

THE king, whose principal view was to prevent the conjunction of the confederates, and, if possible, to fight them separately, did not stay till his whole army was assembled, but, as soon as he got together a body of troops sufficient to make head against any one of the rebels, he sent that body immediately on the service it was destined for, in order to disappoint the general combination.

A LARGE number of horse and foot (whose post was in the van of the royal army when the king marched at the head of it) was the first ready, and, without delay, was sent against Amano into Hadea, under the command of the general of the cavalry. This officer executed the service on which he was sent with the greatest diligence possible, having the best horses, and strongest and most active men in the army; by long marches, he came upon the king of Hadea, surprised him before his troops were all assembled, gave him an entire defeat, and made him prisoner. However ill the conjurer had provided for the king's safety; he seems to have been more attentive to his own; great search was made for him by order of Amda Sion, but he was not to be found, having very early, upon the first sight of the king's troops, fled and hid himself in Ifat.

THE next detachment was sent against Sabër-eddin in Fatigat. The governor of Ambara commanded this, with orders

orders to lay the whole country waste, and by all means provoke Saber-eddin to risk a battle, either before or after the junction of the troops which were to march thither from Hadea. But when the king was thus busy with the Moors, news were brought him that the Falasha had rebelled, and were in arms, in very great numbers. The king ordered Tzaga Christos, governor of Begemder, to assemble his troops with those of Gondar, Sacalta, and Damot, and march against these rebels before they had time to ruin the country; and having thus made provision against all his enemies, Amda Sion proceeded with the remainder of his army to Dawaro.

HYDAR was governor in this province for the king, who, though he shewed outwardly every appearance of duty and fidelity, was, notwithstanding, deep in the conspiracy with Saber-eddin, and had close correspondence with the king of Adel, whose capital, Aussa, was not at a great distance from him.

THE king kept his Easter at Gaza, immediately upon the verge of the desert; and, being willing to accustom his troops to action and hardship, he left his tents and baggage behind with the army; and, secretly taking with him but twenty-six horsemen, he made an incursion upon Samhar, destroying all before him, and staying all night, tho' he had no provisions, in the middle of his enemies, without so much as lying down to sleep, slackening his belt, or taking off any part of his armour.

THE king was no sooner gone than the army missed him, and was all in the greatest uproar. But, having finished his expedition, he joined them in the morning, and encamped

camped again with them. On his arrival, he found waiting for him a messenger from Tzaga Christos, with accounts that he had fought successfully with the Falasha, entirely defeated them, slain many, and forced the rest to hide themselves in their inaccessible mountains. Immediately after this intelligence, Tzaga Christos, with his victorious army, joined the king also.

THESE good tidings were followed by others equally prosperous from Hadea and Fatigar. They were, that the king's army in those parts had forced Saber-eddin to a battle, and beaten him, taken and plundered his house, and brought his wife and children prisoners; and that the troops had found that country full of merchandise and riches of all kinds; that they were already laden and incumbered with the quantity to such a degree, that they were all speaking of disbanding and retiring to their houses with riches sufficient for the rest of their lives, although a great part of the country remained as yet untouched, and, therefore, it was requested of the king in all diligence to enter it on his side also, and march southward till both armies met. Immediately upon this message, the king, having refreshed his troops, and informed them of the good prospects that were before them, decamped with his whole army, and entered the province of Ifat.

WHEN Saber-eddin saw the king's forces were joined, that he had no allies, and that it was, in the situation of his army, equally dangerous to stay or to fly, he took a resolution of submitting himself to the king's mercy; but, first, he endeavoured to soften his anger, and obtain some assurances

rances through the mediation of the queen. The king, however, having publicly reproved the queen for offering to intermeddle in such matters, and growing more violent and inflexible upon this application, there remained no alternative but that of surrendering himself at discretion. Whereupon Saber-eddin threw himself at the king's feet. The soldiers and by-standers, far from being moved at such a sight, with one voice earnestly besought the king, that the murderer of so many priests, and the profaner and destroyer of so many Christian churches, should instantly meet the death his crimes had merited. The king, however, whose mercy seems to have been equal to his bravery, after having reproved him with great asperity, and upbraided him with his cruelty, presumption, and ingratitude, ordered him only to be put in irons, and committed to a close prison. At the same time, he displaced Hydar, governor of the province of Dawaro, of whose treason he had been long informed; and he invested Gimmel-eddin, Saber-eddin's brother, with the government of the Mahometan provinces, who, as he pretended, had not been present at the beginning of the war, but had preserved his allegiance to the king, and dissuaded his brother from the rebellion.

WHILE the king was thus settling the government of the rebellious provinces, he received intelligence that the kings of Adel and Mara had resolved to march after him into Shoa when he returned, and give him battle.

At this time the king was encamped on the river Hawash, at the head of the whole army, now united. This news of the hostile intentions of the kings of Adel and Mara, so exasperated

ted him, that he determined to enlarge his scheme of vengeance beyond the limits he had first prescribed to it. With this view, he called the principal officers of his army together, while he himself stood upon an eminence, the soldiers surrounding him on all sides. Near him, on the same eminence, was a monk, noted for his holiness, in the habit in which he celebrated divine service. The king, in a long speech pronounced with unusual vehemence, described the many offences committed against him by the Mahometan states on the coast. The ringleaders of these commotions, he declared, were the kings of Adel and Mara. He enumerated various instances of cruelty, of murder, and sacrilege, of which they had been guilty; the number of priests that they had slain, the churches that they had burned, and the Christian women and children that they had carried into slavery, which was now become a commerce, and a great motive of war. They, and they only, had stirred up his Mahometan subjects to infest the frontiers both in peace and war. He said, that, considering the immense booty which had been taken, it might seem that avarice was the motive of his being now in arms, but this, for his own part, he totally disclaimed. He neither had nor would apply the smallest portion of the plunder to his own use, but considered it as unlawful, as being purchased with the blood and liberty of his subjects and brethren, the meanest of whom he valued more than the blood and riches of all the infidels in Adel. He, therefore, called them together to be witnesses that he dedicated himself a soldier to Jesus Christ; and he did now swear upon the holy eucharist, that, though but twenty of his army should join with him, he would not turn his back upon Adel or Mara, till he had either forced them to tribute and submission,

submission, or extirpated them, and annihilated their religion.

He then entered the tent-door, and took the sacrament from the hands of the monk, in presence of the whole army. All the principal officers did the same, and every individual of the army, with repeated shouts, declared, that they acceded to, and were bound by, the oath the king then had made. A violent fury spread in this instant through the whole army; they considered that part of the king's speech as a reproach, which mentioned the spoils they had taken to have been bought by the blood of Christians, their brethren. Every hand laid hold of a torch, and, whether the plunder was his own or his fellow-soldiers, each man set fire, without interruption, to the merchandise that was next him. The whole riches of Ifat and Hadea, Fatigar and Dawaro, were consumed in an instant by these fanatics, who, satisfied now that they were purged from the impurity which the king had attributed to their plunder, returned poor to their standards, but convinced in their own conscience of having now, by their sacrament and expiation, become the soldiers of Christ, they thirsted no longer after any thing but the blood of the inhabitants of Adel and Mara.

Soon after, Amda Sion heard that the Moors had attacked his army in Ifat two several nights, and that his troops had suffered greatly, and with difficulty been able to maintain themselves in their camp. The king was then upon his march when he heard these disagreeable news; he hastened, therefore, immediately to their relief, and encamped at night in an advantageous post, short of his main army, with a view of taking advantage of this situation, if the Moors,

as he expected, renewed their attack that night for the third time.

THE Abyssinians, to a man, are fearful of the night, unwilling to travel, and, above all, to fight in that season, when they imagine the world is in possession of certain genii, averse to intercourse with men, and very vindictive, if even by accident they are ruffled or put out of their way by their interference. This, indeed, is carried to so great a height, that no man will venture to throw water out of a basin upon the ground, for fear that, in ever so small a space the water should have to fall, the dignity of some elf, or fairy, might be violated. The Moors have none of these apprehensions, and are accustomed in the way of trade to travel at all hours, sometimes from necessity, but often from choice, to avoid the heat. They laugh, moreover, at the superstitions of the Abyssinians, and not unfrequently avail themselves of them. A verse of the Koran, sewed up in leather, and tied round their neck or their arms, secures them from all these incorporeal enemies; and, from this known advantage, if other circumstances are favourable, they never fail to fight the Abyssinians at or before the dawn of the morning, for in this country there is no twilight.

THE Moors did not, in this instance, disappoint the king's expectation; as they, with all possible secrecy, marched to the attack of the camp, while the king, having refreshed his troops, put himself in motion to intercept them; and they were now arrived, and engaged in several places with very great vigour. The camp was in apparent danger, though vigorously defended. At this moment the king, with his fresh troops, fell violently upon their rear; and, it being

being known to the Moors that this was the king, they withdrew their army with all possible speed, carrying with them a very considerable booty.

THE success which had followed these night expeditions, above all, the small loss that had attended the pursuit, even after they were defeated, from the perfect knowledge they had of the country, inspired them with a resolution to avoid pitched battles, but to distress and harass the king's army every night. - They accordingly brought their camp nearer than usual to the king's quarters. This began to be felt by the army, which was prevented from foraging at a great distance; but provisions could not be dispensed with. The king, therefore, detached a large body of horse and foot that had not been engaged or fatigued. The greatest part of the foot he ordered to return with the cattle they should have taken, but the horse, with each a foot-soldier behind him, he directed to take post in a wood near a pool of water, where the Moorish troops, after an assault in the night, retired, and took refreshments and sleep by the time the sun began to be hot. The Moors again appeared in the night, attacked the camp in several places, and alarmed the whole army; but, by the bravery and vigour of the king, who every where animated his troops by his own example, they were obliged to retreat a little before morning, more fatigued, and more roughly handled, than they had hitherto been in any such expedition.

THE king, as if equally tired, followed them no further than the precincts of his camp; and the Moors, scarcely comforted by this forbearance after so great a loss, retreated to receive succour of fresh troops as usual, and enjoy their repose in the neighbourhood of shade and water. They had, how-

cast their shields aside their arms, disposed of their wounded in proper places, and began to assuage their thirst after the toils of the assault, when the Abyssinian horse, breaking through the cover, came swiftly upon them, unable either to fight or to fly, and the whole body of them was cut to pieces without one man escaping.

3. The king, upon return of his troops, began to consider, and, by combining various circumstances in his mind, to suspect strongly, that, from the Moors attacking him, as they had for some time lately done, always in the most unfavourable circumstances, there must be some intelligence between his camp and that of the enemy. Upon examining more particularly into the grounds of this suspicion, three men of Harar (who had long attended the army as spies) were discovered, and being convicted, were carried out, and their heads cut off at the entrance of the camp; after which the king, who now found himself without an enemy in these parts, struck his tents, and returned to Gaza in Darwaro.

This movement of Amda Sidn's had more the appearance of opening a campaign than the closing of one, and occasioned great discontent among the soldiers, who had done their business, and were without an enemy, just at that time that the rains fall so heavy, and the country becomes so unwholesome as to make it unadvisable to keep the field. They, therefore, remonstrated by their officers to the king, that they must return to their houses for the several months of winter which were to follow; and that, after the fatigues, dangers, and hardships they had undergone for so many months,

months, to persist in staying longer at such a season, in this country was equal to the condemning them to death.

GIMMEL-EDDIN, moreover, the new-appointed governor, insisted with Amada Sion, that he was able enough himself to keep all the tributary provinces in peace, and true allegiance to the king; but if, on the contrary, the king chose to eat them up with a large army living constantly among them, as well as upon every pretence, laying them waste with the sword in the manner he was now doing, he could not be answerable for, nor did he believe they would be able to pay him, the tribute he expected from them. But the king, who saw the motives both of his officers and of the Moorish governor, continued firm in his resolutions. He sharply reproved both Gimmel-eddin and his army for their want of discipline, and desire of idleness, and ordered the officers to acquaint their men, that, if they were afraid of rains, he would carry them to *Adel*, where there were none; that, for his part, he made a resolution, which he would keep most steadily, never to leave his camp and the field while there was one village in his own dominions that did not acknowledge him for its sovereign.

ACCORDINGLY on the 13th day of June 1316, immediately after this declaration, he struck his tents, and marched into Samhar, to disappoint, if possible, the confederacy that some of the principal Moorish states had entered into against him, which were agreed one by one, to harass his camp by night, and, after having obliged him to retreat to *Shor* in disorder, to give him battle there before he had time to refresh his troops. The authors of this conspiracy were seven in number, *Adel*, *Mara*,

Mara, Tico, Agwama, Bakla*, Murgar, and Gabula, and they had already collected a considerable army. The king, who saw they persisted in their nightly attacks, rode out, thinly accompanied, to choose a post for an encampment that was to give him the greatest advantage over his enemy; and, whilst thus occupied, he was suddenly surrounded by a body of troops of Adel lying in ambush for him. A soldier (in appearance an Abyssinian) came so close to the king as to strike him with his sword on the back with such violence that it cut his belt in two, and, having wounded him thro' his armour, was ready to repeat the blow, when the king pierced him through the forehead with his lance, upon which his party fled.

BUT the Moors, for five successive nights, did not fail in their attempts upon his camp, which wearied and greatly contributed to discontent his men; and the more so, because the enemy declined coming to any general engagement, though the king frequently offered it to them. Amda Sion, therefore, decamped the 28th of June, and, leaving this disadvantageous station, advanced a day's march nearer Mara, pointing, as it were, to the very center of that kingdom. But here, again, he was stopped by the discontent of his soldiers, who absolutely refused to go farther, or spend the whole season in arms, in this inclement climate, while the rest of his subjects, in full enjoyment of health and plenty, were rioting at home.

THIS disposition of his army was no sooner known to the king than he called the principal of them together, and,

* A tribe of the Shepherds; all the rest, but the two first, unknown in Abyssinia at this day.

and, planting himself on a rising ground, he began to harangue his soldiers with so much eloquence and force of reasoning, that they who before had only learned to admire their king as a soldier, were obliged to confess that, as an orator, he as much excelled every man in his state, as he did the lowest man of his kingdom in dignity. He put his soldiers in mind, "that this was not a common expedition, "like those of his predecessors, marching through the country for the purpose of levying their revenue; that the intention of the present war was to avenge the blood of so many innocent Christians slain in security and full peace, from no provocation but hatred of their religion: that they were instruments in the hand of God to revenge the death of so many priests and monks who had been wantonly offered as sacrifices upon their own altars: that they were not a common army, but one confederated upon oath, having sworn upon the sacrament, at the passage of the river Hawash, that they would not return into Abyssinia till they had beat down and ruined the strength of the Mahometans in those kingdoms; so that now, when every thing had succeeded to their wishes, when every Mahometan army had been defeated as soon as it presented itself, and the whole country lay open to the chastisements they pleased to inflict, to talk of a retreat or forbearance was to make a mockery at once of their oath, and the motive of their expedition. He shewed, by invincible reasonings, the great hardships and danger that would attend his retreat through a country already wasted and unable to maintain his army; what an alarm it would occasion in Shoa, to find him returning with an enemy at his heels, following him to his very capital; that such, however, must be the consequence;

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“...; for it was plain, that, though the enemy declined fighting, yet there was no possibility of hindering them from following him so near as to give his retreat every appearance of flight, and to bring an expedition, begun with success, to an ignominious and a fatal end.

“ He upbraided them with his own example, that early “ their prophets had foretold he was a prince fond of luxury and ease, which, in the main, he did not deny, but “ confessed that he was so; and that they all should have “ an attachment to their pleasures and enjoyments, he “ thought but reasonable. He desired, however, in this, “ they would do as much as he did, and only suspend their “ love of ease and rest as long as their duty to God, in their “ country, and their murdered brethren, required; for, till “ these duties were fulfilled, ease and enjoyment to a Christian, and especially to them bound by oath to accomplish “ a certain purpose, was, in his eyes, little short of apostasy.” A loud acclamation now followed from the whole army. They declared again, that they renewed their sacrament taken at the passage of the Hawash, that they were Christ's soldiers, and would follow their sovereign unto death.

Though the great personal merit of the king, and the grace, force, and dignity with which he spoke, had, of themselves, produced a very sudden change in the mind of the soldiers, yet, to the increase of this good disposition it had very much contributed, that a monk, of great holiness and austerity of manners, living in a cell on the point of a steep rock, had come down from Shoa to the camp, declaring that he had found it written in the Revelation of St John, that this year the mission of Mahomet was to be
utterly

utterly extirpated throughout the world. Full of this idea, on the feast of Ras Werk, in the month of July, the army passed the Yafs, a large river of the kingdom of Mara, and encamped there. The troops were alarmed, the night after their arrival, by a piece of intelligence which proved a falsehood.

A woman, whose father had been a Christian, said, that she had very lately left the Moorish camp; that the enemy were at no great distance, and only waited a night of storm and rain to make a general attack upon the king's army; and the clouds threatening then a night of foul weather, it was not doubted but the engagement was thereupon immediately to follow. It blew, then, so violent a storm, that the king's tent, and most of those in the camp, were thrown down, and the soldiers were in very great confusion, imagining, every moment, the Moors ready to fall on them. But whether the story was a falsehood, or the storm too great for the Moors to venture out, nothing happened that night, nor, indeed, during their stay in that station.

At this time a number of priests and others came out of curiosity to see their king making conquests of provinces and people till then unknown to them even by name: several large detachments of fresh troops from Abyssinia also arrived, and joined the army. Upon this, Amda Sion advanced a day's journey farther into Mara, and took a strong post, resolving to maintain himself there, and, by detachments, lay the whole country desolate. This place is called *Daffi*. There was neither river, however, nor spring near it, but only water procured by digging in the sand, being what comes down from the sides of the mountains in the rainy season.

season; and, having filtered through the loose earth, has reached the sand and gravel, where it stagnates, or finds slowly its level to the sea. Here the king was taken dangerously ill with the fever of the Kolla.

THE altercations between Amda Sion and his soldiers, and the resolutions taken in consequence of these, were faithfully carried to the king of Adels. The march of the king forward at such a season of the year, the slow pace with which he advanced towards the very heart of the country, the care he took of providing all necessaries for his army, and his reinforcing it at such a season, all shewed this was no partial, sudden incursion, but that it was meant as a decisive blow, fatal to the independence of these petty sovereigns and states. To this it may be added, that Gimmel-eddin, whom the king had released from prison, and set over the Moorish provinces of Abyssinia, conveyed to them, in the most direct manner, that such were the king's purposes. He told them, moreover; this march into their country was not either to increase their tribute, or for the sake of plunder, or to force them to be his subjects; that Amda Sion's main design was against their religion, which he and his soldiers had vowed they were to destroy; that it was not their time to think of peace or tribute upon any terms; for, were they even to sell their wives and children, the price would not be accepted, unless they forsook the religion of their fathers, and embraced Christianity. He further added, that his resolution was already taken, that he would die firm in the faith, a good Mahometan, as he had lived; not tamely, however, but in the middle of his enemies; and that he was now making every sort of preparation to resist to the latest breath.

No sooner was this intelligence from Gimmel-eddin published, than a kind of frenzy seized the people of Adel; they ran tumultuously to arms, and, with shrieks and adjurations, demanded to be led immediately against the Abyssinians, for they no longer desired to live upon such terms.

THERE was among the leading men of the Moors one Saleh, chief of a small district called Cassi, by birth a Sheriffe, *i. e.* one of the race of Mahomet, and who, to the nobility of his birth, joined the holiness of his character. He was *Imam*, as it is called, or *high priest* of the Moors, and, for both these reasons, held in the greatest estimation among them. This man undertook, by his personal influence, to unite all the Moorish states in a common league. For it is to be observed, that, though religion was very powerful in uniting these Moors against the Christians, yet the love of gain, and jealousies of commerce, perpetually kept a party alive that favoured the king for their own interest, in the very heart of the Moorish confederacies and councils. To overcome this was the object of Saleh, and he succeeded beyond expectation, as sixteen kings brought 40,000 men into the field under their several leaders; but the chief command was given to the king of Adel.

I MUST put the reader in mind that I am translating an Abyssinian historian. These, then, whom this chronicle styles Kings, must be considered as being only hereditary and independent chiefs, not tributary to Abyssinia. Their names are Adel, Mara, Bakla, Haggara, Fadise, Gadai, Nagal, Zuba, Harlar, Hobal, Hangila, Tarrhiith, Ain, Ilbiro, Zeyla, and Estè. Now, when we consider that these sixteen kings brought

only 40,000 men; and that they were commanded under these sixteen by 2712 leaders, or governors of districts, all which are set down by name, we must have a very contemptible opinion of the extent and populousness of these newly-erected kingdoms.

It appears to me unnecessary to repeat, after my historian, the names of each of these villages, which probably do not now exist, and are, perhaps, utterly unknown. I shall only observe in passing, that here we find Tarshish, or Tarshish, a kingdom on the coast of the ocean, directly in the way to Sofala; another strong presumption that Sofala and Ophir were the same, and that this is the Tarshish where Solomon's fleet stopt when going to Ophir.

AMDA SION's fever hindering him to march forward, and being unwilling to risk a battle where he was not able himself to command, he continued close in his strong camp at Dassi, waiting his recovery; but, in the mean time, he made considerable detachments on all sides to lay the country waste around him, till he should be able to advance farther into it.

OF all the royal army, as it stood upon the establishment, the king had only with him the troops from the provinces of Amhara, Shoa, Gojam, and Damot, and these were what composed the rear, when the whole, called the royal army, was assembled; all his troops were regularly paid, well armed, and clothed, and were not only provided with every necessary, but were become exceedingly rich, and, therefore, the more careless of discipline, and difficult to manage, on account of the repeated conquests that had followed one another

another ever since the king had crossed the river Hawash, and come into the desert kingdom of Mara, unfruitful in its soil, but flourishing by trade, and rich in India commodities. The soldiers had here so loaded themselves with spoils and merchandize, that they began rather to think of returning home, and enjoying what they had got, than of pushing their conquests still farther to the destruction of Adel and Mara. The putrid state of the water, in this sultry and unwholesome climate, had afflicted the king with the fever of the country, which he thought not by any means to remedy or prevent. No consideration could keep him from exposing himself to the most violent sun-beams, and to the more noxious vapours of the night; and it was now the seventh day his fever had been increasing, although he neither ate nor drank. The army expecting, from the king's illness, a speedy order to return, conversed of nothing else within their camp, with that kind of security as if they had already received orders to return home.

THE Mahometan army had assembled; and no news had been brought of it to the king. Saleh's influence had united them all; and the king's sickness had made this easier than it otherwise would have been. It happened, then, that, the king's fever abating the ninth day, he sent out to procure himself venison, with which this country abounds, and which is believed, by people of all ranks in Abyssinia, to be the only proper food and restorative after sickness. After having killed sufficiently for the king's immediate use, the huntmen returned; two only remained, who continued the pursuit of the game through the woods, till they were four days journey distant from their camp, when, being in search of water for their dogs, they met a Moor engaged in

in the same business with themselves, who shewed them his army encamped at no considerable distance, and in very great numbers. Upon this they returned in all haste to the king to apprize him of his danger, and he sent immediately some horse to discover the number, situation, and designs of the enemy; above all, if possible, to take a prisoner, for the huntsmen had put theirs to death, that he might be no incumbrance to them upon their return.

THE king's fever was now gone, but his strength was not returned; and, the necessity of the case requiring it, he attempted to rise from his bed and put on his armour, but, fainting, fell upon his face with weakness, while his servant was girding his sword.

THE horse now returned, and confirmed the tidings the huntsmen had brought; they had found the Moorish army in the same place it was first discovered, by the water-side; but the account of their number and appearance was such that the whole army was struck with a panic. The king's wives (as the historian says, by which it should appear he had more than one) endeavoured to persuade him not to risk a battle in the weak state of health he then was, but to retire from this low, unwholesome country, and occupy the passes that lead into Upper Abyssinia, so as to make it impossible for the enemy to follow him into Shoa.

THE king having washed and refreshed himself, with a countenance full of confidence, sat down at the door of his tent: whilst officers and soldiers crowded about him, he calmly, in the way of conversation, told them,—“That, being men of experience as they were, he was surprised they

" should be liable, at every instant, to panic and despon-
 " dency, totally unworthy the character of a veteran army.
 " You know," said he, " that I came against the king of Adel,
 " and to recover that province, one of the old dependencies
 " of my crown. And though it has happened that, in
 " our march, you have loaded yourselves with riches, which
 " I have permitted, as well out of my love to you, as because
 " it distresses the enemy, yet my object was not to plunder
 " merchants. If in battle to-morrow I be beaten, for God
 " forbid that I should decline it when offered, I shall be the
 " first to set you the example how to die like men in the
 " middle of your enemies. But while I am living, it never
 " shall be said that I suffered the standard of Christ to fly
 " before the profane ensigns of infidels. As to what regards
 " our present circumstances; my sickness, and the number
 " of the Moorish troops, these make no alteration in my good
 " hopes that I shall tread upon the king of Adel's neck to-
 " morrow. For as it was never my opinion that it was my
 " own strength and valour, or their want of it, which has so
 " often been the means of preserving me from their hands,
 " so I do not fear at present that my accidental weakness
 " will give them any advantage over me, as long as I trust
 " in God's strength as much as ever I have done."

THE army, hearing with what confidence and firmness
 the king spake, began to look upon his recovery as a mi-
 racle. They all, therefore, with one accord, took to their
 arms, and desired to be led forward to the enemy, without
 waiting till they should come to them: They only beseech-
 ed the king that he would not expose his person as usual,
 but trust to the bravery of his troops, eager for action, with-
 out being lavish of that life, the loss of which would be to

the

the Mahometans a greater victory than the regaining all he had conquered. The king hereon, bidding his troops to be of good courage, take rest and refreshment, sent away the women, children, and other incumbrances, to a small convent on the side of the mountain, called *Debra Martel**; and, being informed of the situation of the country in general, and the particular posts where he could get water in greater plenty, he advanced with his army by a slow march towards the enemy.

THE next day he received intelligence by a Moor, that the Mahometans had not only thrown poison into all the wells, but had also corrupted all the water in the front of the army by various spells and enchantments; that they were not advancing, but were waiting for troops from some of the small districts of Adel that had not yet joined the army. Hereupon the king ordered his Fit-Auraris to advance a day before him, and sent a priest, called *Tecla Sign*, with him, that he might bless and consecrate the water, and thereby free it from the enchantments of the Moors. He himself followed with his army, and sat down by a small river a short way distant from the enemy.

THE Fit-Auraris is an officer that commands a party of men, who go always advanced before the front of an Abyssinian army, at a greater or smaller distance, according as circumstances require. His office will be described more at large in the sequel.

THE king being arrived at the river, the army began to bathe themselves, their mules, and their horses, in the same manner

* Mountain of the Testimony.

manner as is usual throughout all Abyssinia on the feast of the Epiphany. This lustration was in honour of Tecla Sion, who had consecrated the water, broken all the magic spells, and changed its name to that of the river Jordan. But, while they were thus employed, the Fit-Auraris had come up with a large party of the enemy, and, with them, a number of women, provided with drugs to poison and inchant the water; and this numerous body of fanatics had fallen so rudely on the Fit-Auraris that it beat him back on the main body, to whom he brought the news of his own defeat.

A VIOLENT panic immediately seized the whole Abyssinian army, and they refused to advance a step farther. The tents had been left standing on the side of the river they first came to, and they then passed to the other side. But, upon sight of the Fit-Auraris, they returned to the tents, that, having the river on their front, they might fight the enemy with more advantage if they came to attack them. They did not continue long in this resolution; the greatest part of them were for leaving their tents, and retiring to Abyssinia for assistance, and, when the numbers should be more upon an equality, return to fight the enemy. The Moorish army at this instant coming in sight, increased the number of converts to this opinion.

THE king, in the utmost agony, galloping through the ranks, continued to use all manner of arguments with his mutinous soldiers. He told them, that retiring to their camp was to put themselves in prison; that, being mostly composed of horse, their advantage was in a plain like that before them; that retreating to join the main body, at such a distance, was a vain idea, as the enemy was so close at their

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heels. Finally, all he desired of them was, that those who would not fight should only stand as spectators, but not leave their places. As no sign of content or conviction was returned, the king, seeing that all was lost if they disbanded, the enemy being just ready to engage, ordered his master of the horse, and five others, to attack the left wing of the enemy, while he, with a small part of his servants and household, did the same on the right.

THE Abyssinian history, seldom just to the memory of individuals, hath yet, in this instance, (almost a single one), preserved the names of these brave men. The first was Zana Asferi; the second, Tecla; the third, Wanag Araad; the fourth, Saif Segued, (one of the king's sons;) the fifth, Badel Waliz; and the sixth, Kedami. These, as is supposed, with their attendants and servants, (though history is silent but as to the six) fell furiously on the left of the Mahometan army.

THE king, at the first onset, killed, with his own hand, the two leaders of the right wing; and his son, Saif Segued, having also slain another considerable officer on the left, a panic seized both these bodies of Moors, and the army apparently began, at one and the same time, to waver: On which the Abyssinians, now ashamed of their conduct, and perceiving the king's danger, with a great shout fell furiously upon the enemy. The whole Moorish army having, by this time, joined, the battle was fought with great obstinacy on both sides, till first the center, then the left wing of the Moors, was broken and dispersed; but the right, consisting chiefly of strangers from Arabia, kept together, and, not knowing the country, retired into a narrow deep valley surrounded

surrounded by steep perpendicular rocks, covered thick with wood.

THE Abyssinian army, thinking all at an end by the flight of the Moors, began, after their usual custom, to plunder, by stripping and mangling the bodies of the killed and wounded. But the king, who, from the mistake of the Arabians, saw the destruction of this right wing certain, if immediately pursued, ordered it every where to be proclaimed through the field, that the whole army should repair to the royal standard, which he had set up on an eminence, and give over plundering, under pain of death. Finding this order, however, slackly obeyed, he himself, scouring the field at the head of a few horse, with his own hand slew two of his foldiers whom he found stripping the dead without regard to his proclamation. This example from a prince, exceedingly sparing of the blood of his foldiers, had the effect to recal them all to the royal standard displayed on a rising ground.

HE then separated his army into two divisions; all the foot, and those of his horse that had principally suffered in the severe engagement of the day, he led up to the mouth of the valley where the right wing of the Arabians had shut themselves up; and, having beset all access to the entrance of it, he ordered the foot to climb up through the woods; and on every side surround the valley above the heads of those unhappy people thus devoted to certain destruction.

WHILE this was doing, the king ordered those of the cavalry that had suffered least in the fatigue of the day, to refresh themselves and their horses. He knew no time was

lost by this, as the Moorish army that escaped from the engagement, worn out with fatigue, thirst, and hunger, would only retire a short day's march to the water, where, finding themselves not pursued, and incumbered with the number of their wounded, they would necessarily rest themselves; and this was precisely the situation, in which his hunters first found them by the side of a large pool of water.

THE king gave the command of this part of his army to the master of the horse, with orders to pursue them one day farther; whilst he, having taken a short refreshment, began to attack the right wing of the Arabians shut up in the valley. The king, dismounting, led the attack against the front of the Arabians, who, seeing their situation now desperate, began to make every effort to get from the valley into the plain. But they did not know yet upon what disadvantageous ground they were engaged, till the soldiers from the rocks above, every way surrounding them, rolled down immense stones which passed through them in all directions. Pressed, therefore, violently, by the king in their front, and in the rear destroyed by an enemy they neither could see nor resist, they fell immediately into confusion, and were, to a man, slaughtered upon the spot; upon which the king, giving to his troops orders for a general plunder, retired himself to his camp; and in his tent received from the master of the horse an account of his expedition.

THIS officer had proceeded slowly, spreading his troops as wide as possible upon the tract of the retreating enemy, to give a smaller chance for any to escape. All directed their flight towards the pool of water, and were there destroyed, without mercy, till a little after sun-set. The pursuers had then advanced;

advanced to the ground where Saleh king of Mara had gathered the scattered remains of his once powerful army, but now overcome with heat, dispirited by their defeat, and worn out by the fatigues of a long and obstinate engagement, all that remained of these unfortunate troops were strowed upon the ground, lapping water like beasts, their only comfort that remained, equally incapable of fighting or flying. The master of the horse, in great vigour and strength from his late refreshments and recent victory, had no trouble with these unfortunate people but to direct their execution, and this was performed by the soldiers with all the rage and cruelty that a difference of religion could possibly inspire. For, after the king's speech of the 9th of June, in which he upbraided them with breach of their oath, and that they were slow in avenging the blood of their brethren and priests wantonly slain by the Moors, every man in the army measured the exactness with which he acquitted himself of the sacrament at the Hawash, only by the quantity of blood that he could shed. Weary at last with butchery, a few were taken prisoners, and among these was Saleh king of Mara. It was evening before the king returned from the slaughter of the right wing; and it was night when the soldiers, as fatigued with plundering as with fighting, returned to the camp.

THE next morning, he heard of the success of his cavalry under the master of the horse, who joined him before mid-day. The unfortunate Saleh was, in sight of the whole army, brought before the king, clothed in the distinguished habit and marks of his dignity in which he had fought the day before at the head of his troops; gold chains were about his arms, and a gold collar, enriched with precious stones.

stones about his neck. The king scarcely deigned to speak to him, whilst the royal prisoner likewise observed a profound silence. When the army had satisfied their curiosity with the sight of this prince, (once the object of their fear), the king, by a motion of his hand, ordered him to be hanged upon a tree at the entrance of the camp, with all the ornaments he had upon him. After this the queen of Mara, concerning whom so many surprising stories had been told of her poisoning the waters by drugs and enchantments, was, notwithstanding the known partiality of this king for the fair sex, ordered to be hewn in pieces by the soldiers, and her body given to the dogs.

AMDA SION then dispatched a messenger with the news of his victory to the queen's his wives, and the rest of the ladies he had left with the main army at Debra Martel, when the monks of the convent immediately began a solemn procession and thanksgiving, attended by the exercise of every sort of work of charity and piety.

It was now the end of July, when the rains in Abyssinia become both constant and violent, that the king called a council of the principal nobility, officers, and priests, to determine whether he should go straight home, or send their wives, children, and baggage before them the direct road, when the light and unincumbered army should take a compass, and lay waste a part of the kingdom of Adel they had already invaded, and return in another direction. The majority of the army, and the priests above all, were for the first proposal; but the king and principal officers thought the advantages gained by so much blood were to be followed, and not deserted, till they should either have reduced the

Mahometans to a state of weakness, that should make them no longer formidable to Abyssinia, or, if prosperous fortune still attended them further, extirpate the people and religion together.—This opinion prevailed.

THE king, therefore, dismissed his baggage, his women, children, servants, and useless people. He retained an army of veteran soldiers only, more formidable than six times the number that could be brought against them; and, trusting now to the country into which he marched for support, he advanced, and entered a town called Zeyla, and there took up his quarters. He had scarce taken possession of the town, when that very night he sent a detachment to surprise a large and rich village called Taraca, where he put all the men to the sword, making the women slaves for the service of the army, instead of those whom he had sent home.

THE king's views, by such small expeditions, were to accustom his soldiers to fight out of his presence, and wean them from a persuasion, now become general, that victory could not be obtained but where he commanded.

ON the 10th of July, the king continued his march, without opposition, to Darbè, whence, the next morning, he sent different parties to the right and left, to burn and destroy the country. They accordingly laid waste all the province of Gassi, slaying Abdullah the Sheriffe, who was the governor and son of Saruch the Imam, author of the conspiracy against him. From thence he fell suddenly upon Abalgé and Talab, a large district belonging to the king of Adel.

This prince, hearing that Amda Sion, instead of returning, as was usual in the rainy season, into Abyssinia, had determined to continue to ravage his whole country, had not, on his part, been remiss in preparing means to resist him; and he had assembled, from every province, all the forces they could raise, to make one last effort against their common enemy.

AMDA SION, therefore, had scarcely retired from the destruction of Talab, when the king of Adel (become now desperate by being so long a spectator of the ruin of his kingdom) marched hastily to meet him, with much less precaution than his own situation, and the character of his enemy, required. Amda Sion, whose whole wish was to bring the Moors to an engagement as often as occasion presented, left off his plundering upon the first news that the king of Adel had taken the field, and, allowing him to choose the ground on which he was to fight, the next day he marched against him, having (as sure of victory) first detached bodies of horse to intercept those of the Moors that should fly when defeated; For no general was more provident than this king for the destruction of his enemy. He then led his troops against the king of Adel, and, spurring his horse, was already in the midst of the Moorish army before the most active of his soldiers had time to follow him. The Abyssinians, as usual, threw themselves like madmen upon the Moors, at the sight of the king's danger. The king of Adel was defeated with little resistance: that unfortunate prince himself was slain upon the spot, and the greatest part of his army destroyed (after they thought themselves safe) by the ambushes of fresh horse the king had placed in their rear before the battle.

THE three children of the king of Adel, and his brother, who had all been in the engagement, seeing the great inferiority of their troops, and terrified at the approaching fate of their country, loading themselves with the most valuable of their effects, (which, in token of humility, they carried upon their heads, shoulders, and in their hands,) came with these presents before the king, who was sitting armed at the door of his tent, and, without further apology, or assurance given, threw themselves, as is the custom of Abyssinia, at his feet, with their foreheads in the dust, intreating pardon for what had hitherto been done amiss; submitting to him as his subjects, professing their readiness to obey all his commands, provided only that he would proceed no further, nor waste and destroy their country, but spare what still remained, which was, for the most part, the property of Arabian merchants who had done him no injury.

BUT the king seemed little disposed to credit these assurances. He told them plainly, " That they, and all Ethiopia, " knew the time was when they were under his dominion, " paid him the same tribute, and owed him the same allegiance with the rest of his subjects; that neither he, nor " his predecessors, at that time, had ever oppressed them, " but returned them present for present, gold for gold, apparel for apparel, and dismissed them contentedly home " whenever they came to pay their duty to them: That lately, " from supposed weakness in him, when he was young in " the beginning of his reign, and encouraged by the great " addition of their brethren, who flocked to them from Arabia, they had, without provocation, thrown off their allegiance to him, upbraiding him as a eunuch, fit only to " take care of the women of their seraglio, with many such

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“ taunting messages, equally unworthy the majesty and me-
 “ mory of a prince like him: That, could this be passed over,
 “ still there was a crime that all the blood of Adel could not at-
 “ tone for: They had, without provocation, murdered his
 “ priests, burnt their churches, and destroyed his defenceless
 “ people in their villages, merely from a vain belief that they
 “ were too far to be under his protection: That, to punish them
 “ for this, he was now in the midst of their country, and, if
 “ his life was spared, never would he turn his back upon Adel.
 “ while he had ten men with him capable of drawing their
 “ swords. He, therefore, ordered them to return, and ex-
 “ pect the approach of his army.”

THE two eldest children and the brother were so struck
 with the fierce manner and countenance with which the
 king spoke, that they remained perfectly silent. But the
 youngest son (a youth of great spirit, and who, with
 the utmost difficulty, had been forced by his parents to
 fly after the battle) answered the king with great resolu-
 tion :—

“ IT is a truth known to the whole kingdom, that Adel:
 “ has never belonged to any sovereign on earth but to our-
 “ selves. Violence and power, which destroy and set up
 “ kingdoms, have at times done so with ours; but that you
 “ are not otherwise, than by these means, king of our coun-
 “ try, our colour, stature*, and complexion sufficiently shew.
 “ We have been free, and were conquered; we now have
 “ attempted to regain our freedom, and we have failed: We
 have

* The Moors in general are much squarer, stouter-made men, than the Abyssinians.

“ have not been inferior to you in every kind of civility, receiving you and your predecessors when you came into our country, singing before you, and rejoicing, because we knew that you had always among you men of great worth and bravery.

“ As to the accusation against us, that we robbed the Christians, you yourself see the riches of our country, which we get by our own industry and commerce, whilst the Abyssinians were naked shepherds and robbers. In the days of your predecessors, a handful of us would have chased an army of them, and it would be so now, were it not for the personal valour and conduct of your prince. But you, better than any one, can be the judge of this; and I can appeal to you, how often they have been upon the point of deserting you, in return for all the victories and riches they have shared with you; while there is not a Moor in Adel but would have willingly died in the presence of such a prince as you. It is then you, not your army, that we fear; we know perfectly the value of both. You have already enjoyed all the merit and profit of conquest; but utterly destroying defenceless people is unworthy of any king, and still more of a prince of your character.”

THE king, without any sign of displeasure at the freedom of this speech, answered him calmly: “ Words and resolutions like these occasioned your father to lose his life in battle. I come not to argue with you what you are to do, nor did I send for you to preach to you; but if the queen your mother, the rest of your father’s family, and the principal people who, after your father’s death, are now

“ to govern Adel, do not, by to-morrow evening, surrender
“ themselves to me at my tent-door, as you have done, I will
“ lay the province of Adel waste, from the place where I
“ now sit, to the borders of the ocean.”

THIS unpromising interview with the king was faithfully communicated by the young princes to their mother, earnestly desiring her to trust the king's mercy, and to throw herself at his feet the next morning without reserve. But those who had been the persuaders of the war (for the late king of Adel was but a weak prince) reckoned themselves in much greater danger with Amda Sion than was the royal family. They, therefore, agreed to try their fortune again in battle, binding themselves to live and die with each other, by mutual oaths and promises. They also sent to the princes this resolution, by an old enemy of Amda Sion, persuading them to make their escape as soon as possible, and come and head their forces that were then raised, and ready to conquer or die together, when the family should be out of the enemy's hands.

THE king, well informed of what had passed, decamped immediately from the station where he was, exceedingly irritated; and, having passed the great river called Aco, he took post in the town of Marmagab; and the next day, dividing his army, he sent two bodies by different routes into the enemy's territories, with a strict command to leave nothing undestroyed that had the breath of life; he himself, with the third division, burning and laying waste the whole country before him, proceeded straight to the place where he heard the chiefs of Adel were assembling an army. There he found some troops, mostly infantry, who kept a
good

good countenance, and seemed perfectly prepared and disposed to engage him. But an immense multitude of useless people covered the plain, old men, women, and children, with the parents, wives, and families of those he had already slain ; and these were determined, with the remnant of their countrymen, to conquer this invader, or to perish.

THE king, upon perceiving this strange mixture, halted for a time in great surprise and astonishment. He could not penetrate into the motive of assembling such an army ; and sending a party of horse, as it were, to disperse them, he found everywhere a stout resistance ; soldiers well provided with swords and shields, and a multitude of archers, who rained showers of arrows upon him, while the women, with clubs, poles, stakes, and stones, damped the ardour of his soldiers, who, when they first charged, scarcely expected resistance. The king, seeing the battle every minute become more doubtful, and having but few troops, began to repent that he had weakened his army by detachments ; he instantly dispatched orders to them to advance, and fall upon the enemy in the nearest direction possible. At the same time, he himself made an extraordinary effort with his horse, but all in vain ; and he found, on every side, people who presented themselves willingly to death, but who would not quit their station while they had power to defend themselves in it.

CONSPICUOUS above all these for his dress, his youth, his many acts of valour, and his graceful figure, was the young king of Wypo, who, encouraging his troops, presented himself wherever Amida Sion was in person. The remarkable resistance that this young prince made, soon drew the attention

attention of the king of Abyssinia ; who, sheathing his sword, took a bow in his hand, and, as my historian says, choosing the broadest arrow he could find, struck this young hero through the middle of his neck, so that, half being cut through, his head inclined to one shoulder, and soon after he fell dead among his horse's feet.

THIS fight was one just calculated to strike such an army as this with terror. They immediately turned their backs, and, unluckily falling in with the two detachments marching to the king's relief, they were all cut to pieces to the number of 5000; a great proportion of which were women and aged persons, unskilled in war, further than as they were prompted by a long sufferance of injuries, accumulated now to a mass, that made them weary of life. My historian further says, that three only of the Moorish army escaped. On the king's side many principal officers were killed; and there was scarce one horseman that was not wounded. Amda Sion, therefore, when speaking of this campaign, after his return, among his nobility at Shoa, used to say, " Deliver me from fighting with old women;" alluding to this battle, where he was in the greatest danger. The fate of the unfortunate king of Wypo was particularly hard. He had lately married the king of Adel's daughter; and it was the staying for him, and his marriage, that lost the favourable opportunity of fighting the Abyssinians, when the army was in dependency upon the king's being taken ill of the fever.

THE next campaign the king began, by a march first to Saffogade, where he assisted at the celebration of the feast of St John the Baptist; and he gave orders, that day, to raze all

the Mahometan mosques to the ground, to destroy all the grain, burn the villages, and put the people to the sword, which was executed accordingly. The king then decamped the fourth of July; and, passing the great river (Zorat) came to the country of the Oritii, and took up his quarters there. The people of this province were in the very worst reputation for cruelty, and hatred of the Christian name. They were perpetually making incursions into the Christian villages, and those that fell alive into their hands, they either castrated, cut off their nose or ears, or otherwise mangled them.

THE king, to vindicate the severity he was about to exercise, ordered all those people, who had suffered in this manner, to be collected and brought before him. The number appeared very considerable; and, having inquired in what occupations they had been employed, they answered, that their business was to cut down wood, draw and fetch water, and some of them to take care of the Moorish women. Violently affected with this, he called his principal officers, and commanded them, that, when he decamped with his army the next day, small parties should remain in ambush on each side of the town. The king, early in the morning, marched out with sound of trumpet; and the Moors, thinking the army gone, returning to their houses, were set upon by the parties, and destroyed.

THE next place the king came to was Haggara, where he staid eight days, and celebrated there the feast of the Cross; surrounding his camp with palisades, as if he was to stay there a considerable time. Here he made his soldiers deposit all their plunder, leaving it under the care of a weak guard,

guard, and marched out with sound of trumpet, as if he was going upon some expedition. There was a large body of troops in ambush, and the Moors, concealed in woods, and hiding-places, attacked the intrenchment as soon as the king was gone, and had forced the palisades, when they were every where furrounded by the parties left behind, and were all cut to pieces, excepting the old men and women, whose noses and lips the king ordered to be cut off, by way of retaliation, and then dismissed them. Great store of bows, good arms and cloathing, were taken here, lately brought from Arabia for the use of the confederates.

THE king now turned his face homewards, marched off in seven days to Begul in the Sahara, and thence sent a message to the governor of Ifat, commanding him to send to him all those Christians who had apostatized from their faith in his or his brother's time; with notice, that, if he did not comply, he would put him and all his family to death, and give his command to another family. The king ordered these apostates, when delivered, to be severely whipped, and, fettering them with heavy irons, imprisoned them.

FROM Begul the army marched to Waz, thence to Gett, and from Gett to Harla, still laying waste the country. From Harla they marched five days to Delhoya, being determined to make a severe example of this place, because the inhabitants had killed the governor the king had left with them, and, making large fires for the purpose, had burnt and tormented the Christians residing there. He came, therefore, upon this town, and furrounded it in the night; and, after putting men, women, and children to the sword, he razed it to the ground.

FROM Delhoya he proceeded to Degwa, from thence to Warga, which he treated in the same manner as Delhoya, and then entered the province of Dawaro, where he understood that Hydar, governor of that province, with Saber-eddin, and a very valuable convoy coming to him, under their conduct, from Shoa, were intercepted by Hydar's people, and their guard cut to pieces. Instead, therefore, of proceeding to Shoa, as his intention was, he encamped at Bahalla, and there kept the feast of Christmas, laying the whole province, by parties, under military execution; and hearing there that Joseph, governor of Serca, was in understanding with those of Dawaro, he put him in prison, carrying off all his horses, asses, mules, and a prodigious quantity of other cattle, which he drove before him, and ended his expedition by his entry into Shoa.

THIS is the Abyssinian account of the reign of their prince Amda Sion, a little abridged, and made more conformable to the manner of writing English history. The historian, contrary to the usual practice, gives no account of himself; but he seems to have lived in the time of Zara Jacob, the third reign after this. Though he wrote in Shoa, his book is in pure Geez, there being scarcely an Amharic word in it.

THERE are three things which I would now observe; not because they are single instances, but, on the contrary, because, though first mentioned here, they are uniformly confirmed throughout the whole Abyssinian history.

THE first is, that the king of Abyssinia is, in all matters ecclesiastical and civil, supreme; that he punishes all offences committed by the clergy in as absolute and direct a manner as

if these offences were committed by a layman. Of this the treatment of Honorius is an example, who made use only of spiritual weapons against offences, that surely deserved the censure of all churches.

WITH whatever propriety this sentence might have been inflicted upon individuals, and, perhaps, without any bad consequence to the public in general, the law of the land, in Abyssinia, could not suffer this to be inflicted on their king, because very bad effects must have followed it towards the common-weal; for excommunication there is really a capital punishment if executed with rigour. It is a kind of *interdictio aquæ et ignis*, for you yourself are expressly prohibited from kindling a fire, and every body else is laid under a prohibition from supplying either fire or water. No one can speak, eat, or drink with you, enter your house, or suffer you to enter theirs. You cannot buy nor sell, nor recover debts. If under this situation you should be violently slain by robbers, no inquisition is made into the cause of your death, and your body is not suffered to be buried.

I would submit now to the judgment of any one, what sort of government there would be in Abyssinia, if a priest was suffered to lay the king under such interdict or restriction. The kings of that country do not pretend to be saints; indeed, it may be said, they are the very contrary, leading very free lives. Pretences are never wanting, and it is only necessary to find a fanatic priest (which, God knows, is not a rarity in that country) to unhinge government perpetually, and throw all into anarchy and confusion. But nothing of this kind occurs in their history, though the bigotted Le Grande,

Grande, and some of the Jesuits, less bigotted than him, have asserted, that such a practice prevailed in the Abyssinian church, to shew its conformity with the church of Rome ; which we shall see, however, contradicted almost in every prince's reign.

THE second thing I shall observe is, that there is no ground for that prejudice, so common in the writers concerning this country, who say that these people are Nomades, perpetually roving about in tents. If they had ever so little reflected upon it, there is not a country in the world where this is less possible than in Abyssinia, a country abounding with mountains, where every flat piece of ground is, once a-day, during six months rain, cut through by a number of torrents, sweeping cattle, trees, and every thing irresistibly before them ; where no field, unless it has some declivity, can be sown, nor even passed over by a traveller, without some danger of being swept away, during the hours of the day when the rain is most violent ; in such a country it would be impossible for 30 or 40,000 men to encamp from place to place, and to subsist without some permanent retreat. Accordingly they have towns and villages perched upon the pinnacles of sharp hills and rocks, and which are never thought safe if commanded by any ground above them ; in these they remain, as we do in cities, all the rainy season : Nor is there a private person (not a soldier) who hath a tent more than in Britain. In the fair season, the military encamp in all directions cross the country, either to levy taxes, or in search of their enemy ; but nothing in this is particular to Abyssinia ; in most parts of Africa and Asia they do the same.

THE third particular to be observed here is, that, in this prince's reign, the king's sons were not imprisoned in the mountain. For Saif Araad was present with his father at the defeat of Saleh king of Mara, and yet the mountain of Geshen was then set apart as a prison. For the Itcheguè of Debra Libanos was banished there; from which I infer, that after the massacre of the royal family by Judith, on the mountain of Damo, and the flight of the prince Del Naad, to Shoa, the king's children were not confined, nor yet till long after their restoration and return to Tigré, as will appear in the sequel.

AMDA SION died of a natural death at Tegulat in Shoa, after a reign of 30 years, which were but a continued series of victories, no instance being recorded of his having been once defeated.



S A I F A R A A D.

From 1342 to 1370.

This Prince enjoys a peaceable Reign—Protects the Patriarch of Cophits at Cairo from the Persecution of the Soldan.

SAIF ARAAD succeeded his father Amda Sion; and it should seem that, in his time, all was peaceable on the side of Adel, as nothing is mentioned relative to that war.

Indeed, if the increase of trade and power in that corner of Abyssinia arose from the troubles and want of security which the merchants laboured under in Arabia, we cannot but suspect, from a parity of reasoning, that the violent manner in which war had been carried on by Amda Sion, must have occasioned a great many inhabitants to repass the Straits, and return to their own homes.

At this time, news were brought from Cairo, that the Soldan had thrown the Coptic patriarch, Marcus, into prison. There was then a constant trade carried on between Cairo and Abyssinia, through the desert; and also from Cairo and Suakem on the Red Sea. Besides, great caravans, formerly composed of Pagans, now of Mahometans, passed from west to east, in the same manner as in ancient times, to buy and disperse India goods through Africa. Saif Araad, not having it in his power to give the patriarch other assistance, seized all the merchants from Cairo, and sent horse to interrupt and terrify the caravans. As the cause of this was well known, and that the patriarch was in prison for the sake only of extorting money from him, people on all sides cried out upon the bad policy of the Soldan, who thereupon ordered Abuna Marcus to be set at liberty, without any other condition, than that he should make peace with Saif Araad on the part of Egypt, which was done through the mediation of that prelate.

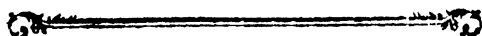


W E D E M A S F E R I.

From 1370 to 1380

Memoirs of this and the following Reign defective.

WE know nothing of this prince, only that he succeeded his father Saif Araad, and reigned ten years; yet his name, which signifies *lover of war*, seems to indicate an active reign. It is remarkable, that in this reign is first mentioned an æra of Abyssinian chronology, which has very much puzzled several learned writers, and the origin of which is not, perhaps, yet fully known. This is that epoch, called that of Maharat, or Mercy, which Scaliger and Ludolf have called the æra of grace. Scaliger says, he has toiled much before he found out what it was; and I doubt his toil has not been blessed with all the success we could wish. That it is not the æra of redemption, is plain upon a hundred trials, nor of the conversion, nor of Dioclesian. What it alludes to we know not, but it is first quoted in the Abyssinian history in this reign, and answers to the year 1348 of Christ; but from what event it had its origin we cannot positively say, nor further, than that all which Scaliger has said concerning it is merely visionary.



D A V I D II.

From 1380 to 1409.

WEDEM ASFERI was succeeded by his brother David, Saif Araad's second son. This prince's reign is remarkable in the annals of the church of Abyssinia, because, at this time, a piece of the true cross, on which our Saviour died, was brought hither from Jerusalem; and, in memory of this great event, the king ordered the sacerdotal vest, or capa, which was before plain, to be embroidered with flowers.

This king, after reigning twenty-nine years, one day viewing a favourite, but vicious horse, received so violent a kick upon his head that it fractured his skull, so that he died upon the spot, and was buried in the great island of Dek in the lake Dembea, or Tzana.

THEODORUS.

From 1409 to 1412.

Memoirs of this Reign, though held in great Esteem in Abyssinia, defective ; probably mutilated by the Ecclesiastics.

DAVID was succeeded by his eldest son Theodorus. He is called Son of the Lion, by the poet, in the Ethiopic encomium upon him, still extant in the liturgy. A miracle is mentioned to have happened, (which would lead us to suspect that he was a saint), during the celebration of his festival, by his mother, who is called Mogessa *. This lady had contented herself with providing great quantity of flesh for the feast ; but, to make it more complete, the heavens in a shower supplied it with store of fine fish, ready roasted.

He was buried in the church of Tedba Mariam in Amhara, after having reigned three years. There must have been something very brilliant that happened under this prince, for though the reign is so short, it is before all others the most favourite epoch in Abyssinia. It is even confidently believed, that he is to rise again, and to reign in
Abyssinia

* Probably Magwas, or Berhan Magwafs, the Glory of Grace ; a name often used by queens ; for Mogessa has no signification, that I know, in any of the languages of Ethiopia

Abyssinia for a thousand years, and in this period all war is to cease, and every one, in fulness, to enjoy happiness, plenty, and peace. Foolish as these legends are, and distant the time, this one was the source of great trouble and personal danger to me, as will be seen in the sequel. What we know certain in this prince's history is, that he abrogated the treaty of partition made by Icon Amlac in favour of the Abuna Tecla Haimanout and his successors, by which one third of the kingdom of Abyssinia was for ever to be set apart as a revenue for the Abuna. This wise prince modified so excessive a provision, reserving to the Abuna for his maintenance a sufficient territory in every province of the kingdom. It is still judged immoderate, and has suffered many defalcations under later princes, who, perhaps, not acting upon the principles of Theodorus, have not been commended by posterity in the manner he has been.



I S A A G.

From 1412 to 1429.

No Annals of this nor the four following Reigns.

THEODORUS was succeeded by Isaac his brother, second son of David. In his reign the Falasha, who, since their overthrow in the time of Amda Sion, had been quiet, broke out into rebellion. We do not know the particulars, but

apprehend some injustice was at that time done, or attempted, against the Jews ; for 24 Judges, 12 from Shoa and 12 from Tigré, (the number having been doubled when there were two kings reigning *), were of a different opinion, and would not comply with the king's will, who thereupon deprived them all of their office. The king, coming upon the army of the Falasha in Woggora, entirely defeated them at Kofflogué, and, in memory thereof, built a church on the place, and called it Debra Ifaac, which remains there to this day.

ISAAC reigned near 17 years, was a prince of great piety and courage. The annals of his reign, probably during the troublesome time that followed, have been lost, and with them great part of his achievements.



ANDREAS I. OR AMDA SION

ISAAC was succeeded by his son Andreas, who reigned only seven months, and they were both buried at Tedba Mariam.

TECLA

* That is, while the family of Zagué reigned in Tigré, and that of Solomon in Shoa, before the restoration.

TECLA MARIAM, OR HASEB NANYA.

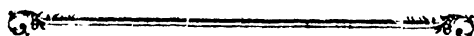
From 1429 to 1435.

THIS prince was third son of David, and succeeded his nephew. He reigned four years, and took for his inauguration name, Haseb Nanya.



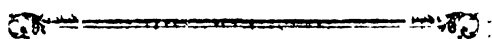
SARWE YASOUS.

THIS prince was son of Tecla Mariam, he reigned only four months ; his inauguration name was Maharak Nanya. He has been omitted in some of the lists of kings.



AMDA YASOUS.

SARWE YASOUS was succeeded by his brother Amda Yasous, whose inauguration name was Badel Nanya. He was second son of Tecla Mariam, and reigned nine months.



ZARA JACOB.

From 1434 to 1468.

Sends Ambassadors from Jerusalem to the Council of Florence—First Entry of the Roman Catholics into Abyssinia, and Dispute about Religion—King persecutes the Remnants of Sabaism and Idolatry—Mahometan Provinces rebel, and are subdued—The King dies.

THESE very short reigns were followed by one of an extraordinary length. Zara Jacob, fourth son of David II. succeeded his nephew, and reigned 34 years, and, at his inauguration, took the name of Constantine. He is looked upon in Abyssinia to have been another Solomon; and a model of what the best of sovereigns should be. From what we know of him, he seems to have been a prince who had the best opportunity, and with that the greatest inclination to be instructed in the politics, manners, and religion of other countries.

A CONVENT had been long before this established at Jerusalem for the Abyssinians, which he in part endowed, as appears by his letters still extant*, written to monks of that
convent.

* Vid. Ludolf, lib. 3. No. 29. I have this letter at length prefixed to the large volume of Canons and Councils, a copy of which was sent by Zara Jacob to the monks in Jerusalem.

convent. He also obtained from the Pope * a convent for the Abyssinians at Rome, which to this day is appropriated to them, though it is very seldom that either there, or even at Jerusalem, there are now any Abyssinians. By his desire, and in his name, ambassadors (*i. e.* priests from Jerusalem) were sent by Abba Nicodemus, the then Superior, who assisted at the council of Florence, where, however, they adhered to the opinion of the Greek church about the proceeding of the Holy Ghost, which created a schism between the Greek and Latin churches. This embassy was thought of consequence enough to be the subject of a painting in the Vatican, and to this picture we owe the knowledge of such an embassy having been sent.

THE mild reign of the last Soldan of Egypt seems greatly to have favoured the disposition of Zara Jacob, in maintaining an intercourse with Europe and Asia. And it is for the first time now in this reign that we read of a dispute upon religion with the Franks, or Frangi, a name which afterwards became more odious and fatal to whomsoever it was applied. Abba George is said to have disputed before the king upon some point of his religion, and to have confuted his opponent even to conviction. We are not informed of the name of Abba George's antagonist, but he is thought to have been a Venetian painter †, who lived many years after in Abyssinia, and, it is believed, died there. From this time, however, in almost every reign, there appear marks of a party formed in favour of the church of Rome, which probably had its first rise from the Abyssinian embassy to the council of Florence.

ALTHOUGH

* St Stefano in Rotondis.

† Francisco de Branca Leon.

ALTHOUGH the established religion in Abyssinia was that of the Greek church of Alexandria, yet many different superstitions prevailed in every part of the country. On the coast of the Red Sea, as well as the Ocean, that is in the low provinces adjoining to the kingdom of Adel, the greatest part of the inhabitants were Mahometans; and the conveniences of trade had occasioned these to disperse themselves through many villages in the high country, especially in Woggora, and in the neighbourhood of Gondar. Dembea on the south, and the rugged district of Samen on the east, were crowded with many deformed sects, while the people of the low valleys, towards Nubia, the Agows at the head of the Nile, and those of the same name, though of a different nation and language, at the head of the Tacazzé, in Lasta, were, for the greatest part, Pagans, *i. e.* of the old religion of Sabæans, worshipping the planets, stars, the wind, trees, and such like. But a more abominable worship than this seemed especially predominant among some of the Agows at the source of the Nile, and the people bordering upon Nubia, as they adored the cow and serpents for their gods, and supposed that, by the latter, they could divine all that was to happen to them in futurity.

WHETHER it was that a long war had thrown a veil over these abuses, or whether (which is more probable) a spirit of toleration had still prevailed in this country, which had at first been converted to Christianity without bloodshed, it is not easy at this time to say. Only their history does not mention, that, before the reign of this prince, idolatry had been considered as a capital crime, or judicially inquired into, and tried as such. An accusation, however, at this time, being brought against some families for worshipping the

cow and the serpent, they were, by the king's orders, seized and brought before himself sitting in judgment, with the principal of his clergy, and with his officers of state, with whom he associated some strangers, lately come from Jerusalem; a custom which prevails to this day. These criminals were all capitally convicted, and executed. A proclamation from the king followed, declaring, That any person who did not, upon his right hand, carry an amulet, with these words, *I renounce the devil for Christ our Lord*, should forfeit his personal estate, and be liable to corporal punishment.

It has been the custom of all Pagan nations to wear amulets upon their arms, and different parts of their bodies. From the Gentiles this usage was probably first learned by the Jews. Amulets were adopted by the Mahometans, but, till now, not worn in Abyssinia by any Christians.

THESE executions, which at first consisted of seven people only, began to be repeated in different places, and at different times. The person employed as inquisitor, and the manner this examination was made, tended to make it still more odious. Amda Sion, the Acab Saat, was the man to whom this persecution was committed. He was the king's principal confidant; of very austere manners: he neither shaved his head nor changed his cloaths; had no connection with women, nor with any great man in court; never saw the king but alone, and, when he appeared abroad, was constantly attended by a number of soldiers, with drums and trumpets, and other equipage, not at all common for a clergyman. He had under him a number of spies, who brought him intelligence of any steps taken in idolatry or treason; and, after being, as he supposed, well informed, he

went to the house of the delinquent, where he first refreshed himself and his attendants, then ordered those of the house he came for, and all that were with them, to be executed in his presence.

AMONG those that suffered were the king's two sons-in-law, married to his daughters Medchan Zamidu, and Berhan Zamidu, having been accused by their wives, the one of adultery, the other of incest: they were both put to death in their own houses, in a very private and suspicious manner. This execution being afterwards declared by the king in an assembly of the clergy and states, certain priests, or others, from Jerusalem, in public, condemned this procedure of the king, as contrary to law, sound policy, and the first principles of justice, which seems to have had such an effect that we hear no more of these persecutions, nor of Amda Sion the persecutor, during the whole of this reign.

THE king now turned his thoughts upon a nobler object, which was that of dividing his country into separate governments, assigning to each the tax it should pay, at what time, and in what manner, according to the situation and capacity of each province. The prosperity of the Moorish states, from the extensive trade constantly carried on there, the bad use they made of their riches by employing them in continual rebellions, made it necessary that the king should see and inquire into each person's circumstances, which he proposed to do, as was usual, before the time of their several investitures.

THE chief of the rich district of Gadai, was the first called on by the king, as it is on this occasion that considerable
presents

presents (seldom less than two years rent of the province) are given, about one half to the king, the other among his courtiers. There was, at this period, a Moorish woman of quality in court, called the queen of Zeyla. She had been brought to the palace with a view that the king should marry her, but he disliking her for the length, as is said, or some other defect, in her foreteeth, had married her to a nobleman.

THIS injury had sunk very deep in the breast of the queen of Zeyla, though she was only nominally so, having been expelled from her kingdom before her coming into Abyssinia. But it happened that she was sister to Mihico son of Mahomet, chief of Gadai, whom she earnestly persuaded to stay at home, and she succeeded so far, as not only to prevail upon him to be absent, but also to withdraw himself entirely from his allegiance.

AT this very time, the king was informed by a faithful servant, a nobleman of Hadea, that the chief of Gadai had long been meditating mischief, and endeavouring to prevail with the king of Adel to march with his army, while great part of the principal people of Hadea, whom he had seduced, were to fall, on the opposite side, upon Dawaro and Bali.

THE king, however, received certain accounts from Adel, that all was quiet there; and inquiring who of his Moorish servants were of the conspiracy in Hadea, he found them to be Goodalu, Alarea, Ditho, Hybo, Ganzè, Saag, Gidibo, Kibben, Gugulé, and Haleb. As there were still forces enough in the province to resist this confederacy, the

king, instead of levying an army against them, thought the proper way was to send them a governor, who should divide the interest and strength of the enemy. There was then an uncle of Mihico remaining in exile at Dejan *, whither he had been sent formerly into banishment at the instance of his nephew, but he still preserved the command of a small district called Bomo, as well as the good inclinations of his own subjects of Gadai, who held his memory in great veneration. The king, therefore, sent for this governor of Bomo, and, setting before him the behaviour of his nephew, he gave him the investiture of his government, with many presents both useful and honourable; and, having ordered some troops from Amhara to attend him, he dismissed him, to punish and expel his nephew from the province of Gadai.

THE fair of Adel was nigh, and thither all the inhabitants of Bali and Dawaro go. It was at this time the conspirators of Hadea had agreed to fall upon the provinces; while, probably, those at the fair had been likewise destined to cut off the inhabitants which might be found there. To counteract these designs, the king, by proclamation, expressly forbade any of the inhabitants of Bali or Dawaro to go to the fair, but all to join the governor of Bomo, who no sooner presented himself in his district, than the people of all ranks flocked to him and submitted.

Mihico saw himself undone by this address of the king, of which he was quite uninformed. He fled immediately
with

* One of the steep mountains used for prisons.

with his family, endeavouring, if possible, to reach Adel; and having come the length of Bawa Amba, a high mountain, where is one of the narrowest and most difficult passes between the high country and the Kolla, here he strowed about, in different places, all the riches that he had brought along with him, in hopes that his pursuers, wearied by the time they came there, should, by the difficulty of the ground, and the booty everywhere to be found, be induced to proceed no further. But this stratagem did not succeed; for he was so closely followed that he was overtaken and slain, his head, hands, and feet were cut off, and immediately sent to the king, who, after public rejoicings, gave the government of Gadai to the person who first informed him of Mihico's conspiracy, and confirmed the governor of Bomo in the province of Hadea likewise, which he made hereditary in his family. In order also to be more in readiness to suppress such insurrections for the future, he gave his Christian soldiers lands adjacent to each other, forming a line all along the frontiers of the Mahometan provinces of Bali, Fatigar, Wadge, and Hadea, that they might be ready at an instant to suppress any tumult in the provinces themselves, or resist any incursions from the kingdom of Adel.

THE king now set about fulfilling another duty of his reign, that of repairing the several churches in Abyssinia which had been destroyed in the late war by the Mahometans, and of building new ones, which it is their constant custom to vow and to erect where victories had been obtained over an infidel enemy. While thus employed, news were sent him from the patriarch of Alexandria, that the church of the Virgin had been destroyed at that city by fire. Full, therefore, of grief for this misfortune, he imme-

diately founded another in Abyffinia, to repair that loss which Christianity had suffered in Egypt.

BEING now advanced in life, he would willingly have dedicated the remainder of it to these purposes, when he was awakened from his religious employments by an alarm of war. The rebels of Hadea, by changing their chief, had not altered their dispositions to rebel, and, seeing the king given to other pursuits, they began to associate and to arm. The governor, whom the king had created after the death of Mihico, gave the king a very late notice of this, which he dissembled, as he was the queen Helena's father: but having, under pretence of consecrating the church of St Cyriacos, assembled a sufficient number of men whom he could trust, he made a sudden irruption into the rebel provinces before they had united their forces. The first that the king met to oppose him was an officer of the rebel governor of Fatigar, who imagined he was engaging only the van of a separate body of Zara Jacob's troops, not believing him to be yet come up in person with so small a number: But being undeceived, he bestirred himself so courageously, that he reached the king's person, and broke his lance upon him; but, in return, received a blow from the lance of the king which threw him to the ground; at the sight of which his whole party took flight, but were overtaken and put to the sword almost to a man; nor was the king's loss considerable, his number being so small.

UPON this defeat, Hiradin, the governor's brother, declared his revolt, and advanced to fight the king at the passage of the river Hawash. Zara Jacob, much offended at this fresh delinquency, sent an officer, called Han Degna, who

found him at the watering-place unsuspecting an enemy; and, before he could put his army in order, he was furrounded, slain, and his head sent to the king, who rejoiced much at the fight, it being brought him on Christmas day.

AFTER this the king collected his dead, and buried them with great honour and shew of grief. He then summoned the governor of Hadea, who professed himself willing to submit his loyalty and conduct to the strictest inquiry. Above all the reasons which hindered him from attending the king, one was known to be, that the queen was not without reason suspected to favour the Mahometans, being originally of that faith herself, and, therefore, for fear of revealing his secret to the enemy, the king did not choose to make her father, the governor of Hadea, partaker in his expedition, but, from jealousy to the queen, ordered him to stay at home. Notwithstanding which it was found, that all in his government were in their allegiance, and ready to march upon the shortest notice had the king required it; therefore he extended his command over the conquered provinces, in room of the rebel governors whom he had removed.

B Æ D A M A R I A M.

From 1468 to 1478.

*Revives the Banishment of Princes to the Mountain—War with Adel—
Death of the King—Attempts by Portugal to discover Abyssinia and
the Indies.*

BÆDA MARIAM succeeded to the throne (as his historian says) against his father's inclination, after having received much ill usage during the earlier part of his life, of which this was the occasion. His mother took so violent and irregular a longing to see her son king, that she formed a scheme, by the strength of a party of her relations and friends, trusting to the weakness of an old man, to force him into a partnership with his father. Examples of two kings, at the same time, and even in this degree of relation, were more than once to be found in the Abyssinian annals, but those times were now no more. A strong jealousy had succeeded to an unreasonable confidence, and had thrown both the person and pretensions of the heirs-apparent of this age to as great a distance as was possible.

THE queen, whose name was Sion Magafs, or the Grace of Sion, first began to tamper with the clergy, who, though
they

they did not absolutely join her in her views, shewed her, however, more encouragement than was strictly consistent with their allegiance. From these she applied to some of the principal officers of state, and to those about the king, the best affected to her son and his succession. These, aware of the evil tendency of her scheme, first advised her, by every means, to lay it aside; and afterwards, seeing she still persisted, and afraid of a discovery that would involve her accomplices in it, they disclosed the matter to the king himself, who resented the intention so heinously, that he ordered the queen to be beaten with rods till she expired. Her body afterwards was privately buried in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, not far from Debra Berhan *.

Nothing had hitherto appeared to criminate the young prince. But it was soon told the king, that, after the death of the queen, her son Bada Mariam had taken frankincense and wax-tapers from the churches, which he employed, at stated times, in the observation of the usual solemnities over his mother's grave. The king, having called his son before him, began to question him about what he had heard; while the prince, without hesitation, gave him a full account of every circumstance, glorying in what, he said, was his duty, and denying that he was accountable to any man on earth for the marks of affection which he shewed to his mother.

THE king, considering his son's justification as a reproach made to himself for cruelty, ordered the prince, and, with him,

* Another church on a hill, one of the quarters of Gondar. It signifies the Hill of Glory, or Brightness.

him, his principal friend Meherata Christos, to be loaded with irons, and banished to the top of a mountain; and it is hard to say where this punishment would have ended, had not the monks of Debra Koffo and Debra Libanos, and all those of the desert, (who thought themselves in some measure accomplices with his mother), by exhortations, pretended prophecies, dreams and visions, convinced the king, that Providence had decreed unalterably, that none but his son, Bæda Mariam, should succeed him. To this ordinance the old king bowed, as it gave him a prospect of the long continuance of his family on the throne of Abyssinia.

ZARA JACOB was no sooner dead, than his son, Bæda Mariam, who succeeded him, began to apply himself seriously to the affairs of government. From the reign of Judith, (in the tenth century), when so many of the princes of the royal family were massacred, the custom of sending the royal children to confinement on the top of a mountain had been discontinued. These children all lived at home with their respective fathers and mothers, like private persons; and the kings seemed to connive at abolishing their former practice, for no mountain had been yet chosen as a substitute to the unfortunate Damo. The disagreement between Zara Jacob and his queen, with the cause of it, and the prince's frankness and resolution, seemed to point out the necessity of reviving the salutary severity of the ancient laws. Bæda Mariam gave orders, therefore, to arrest all his brethren, and send them prisoners for life to the high mountain of *Gesben*, on the confines of Amhara and Begemder, which ever after continued the state-prison for the royal children, till a slaughter,

slaughter, like to that made upon mount Damo, was the occasion, as we shall see, of deserting Gefhen likewise.

THE king applied himself next to measures for the better government of his country. He ordered a general pardon to be proclaimed to all who, by the severity of the late reign, lay under sentence of death, banishment, or any other punishment; and, convoking the states of the kingdom, he met them with a cheerfulness and openness which inspired confidence into every rank, while, at the same time, he filled all the places he found vacant, or that he thought proper to change, with men of the greatest integrity. He then reviewed the whole cavalry that were in his service, which he distributed into bodies, and stationed them in places where they could be readiest called, to execute those designs he had then in contemplation.

THE next year the king went to Debra Libanos in Shoa. It was, however, observed, that his preparations were not such as were usual in these short journies, nor such as were made in peaceable times. On the contrary, orders were sent to the borders of Tigré to receive the royal army, which was soon to arrive in those parts. The rumour of this was quickly spread abroad, and affected all the neighbouring states, according to their several interests. Mahomet king of Adel was the first that took the alarm. Tho' a kind of peace had subsisted for several years between Adel and Abyssinia, yet inroads had been made from each country into the other; and these might have served them as pretexts for war, had that been the inclination of the times. Yet, as both countries happened to be disposed for peace, these outrages passed unnoticed.

BUT, to prevent surprize upon this last movement of the troops, the king of Adel thought he had a right to be informed of Bæda Mariam's intentions, and, with this view, he sent some of the principal people of his country as ambassadors, under pretext of congratulating the king upon his accession to the throne. They met the king in Shoa, and had carried with them very considerable presents. They were received in a very distinguished manner; and the presents which Bæda Mariam returned to the king of Adel were nothing inferior to those he accepted. After having entertained the ambassadors several days with feasting and diversions, he confirmed a peace under the same duties upon trade that had formerly subsisted.

THE king of Dancali also, old, infirm, yet constant in his attachment to the Abyssinians, was not without his inquietudes, though he was not afraid they intended to attack his poor territory with an army. He dreaded lest the army in its march should drink up that little quantity of water which remained to him in summer, and, without which, his kingdom would become uninhabited. It is a low, sandy district, lying on the Red Sea, just where the coast, after bearing a little to the east of north from Sucz to Dancali, makes an elbow, and stretches nearly east, as far as the Straits of Babelmandeb. It has the mines of fossile-salt immediately on the north and north-west, a desert part of the province of Dawaro to the south, and the sea on the north. But it has no port, excepting a spacious bay, with tolerable anchorage, called *the Bay of Bilur**, in lat. $13^{\circ} 3'$, and,

* Bilur, in the language of Samhar, signifies *fossile salt*; if it is coloured with any mineral, so as to be either red or green, it is, in this latter case, applied often to emeralds, and green-rock, crystal.

and, corruptly in vulgar maps and writings, the Bay of Bayloul.

THE kingdom of Dancali is bounded on the east at Azab by part of the kingdom of Adel, and the myrrh country. The king is a Mahometan, as are all his subjects. They are called Taltal, are all black, and only some of them woolly-headed ; a circumstance which probably arises from a mixture with the Abyssinians, whose hair is long. There are but two small rivers of fresh water in the whole kingdom ; and even these are not visible above ground in the hot season, but are swallowed up in the sand, so as to be dug for when water is wanted. In the rainy season, these are swollen by rain falling from the sides of the mountains and from the high lands of Abyssinia, and then only they run with a current into the sea. All the rest of the water in this country is salt, or brackish, and not fit for use, unless in absolute necessity and dry years. Even these sometimes fail, and they are obliged to seek, far off in the rainy frontiers of Abyssinia, water for themselves, and pasture for their miserable goats and sheep.

WHEN the Indian trade flourished, this prince's revenue arose chiefly from furnishing camels for the transport of merchandise to all parts of Africa. Their commerce is now confined to the carrying bricks of solid, or fossil salt, dug from pits in their own country, which, in Abyssinia, pass instead of silver currency ; these they deliver at the nearest market in the high lands at a very moderate profit, after having carried them from the sea-side through the dry and burning deserts of their own country, at the great risk of being murdered by Galla.

THE presents sent to Bada-Mariam from Dancali did not make a great figure when compared with those of Adel. They consisted of one horse, a mule, a shield of elephant's hide, a poisoned lance, two swords, and some dates. Poor as these presents were, they were much more respected than those of Adel, because they came from a loyal heart; while the others were from a nation distinguished every year by some premeditated action of treachery and bloodshed. The king, having first sent for the Abuna, Imaranha Christos, and called the ambassadors of Dancali and Adel into his presence, declared to them, that neither of these states was to be the scene of war, but that he was instantly to march against the Dobas *, whose constant inroads into his country, and repeated cruelties, he was resolved no longer to suffer. He required the ambassadors to warn their masters to keep a strict neutrality, otherwise they would be infallibly involved in the same calamities with that nation.

LENT being now near, the king returned to Ifras, there to keep his fast, and distributed his horse on the side of Ambasanet, having sent orders to the governor of Amhara to join him immediately, who was then at Salamat besieging a party of rebels upon Mount Gehud, which signifies the *Mountain of Manifestation*. It was the intention of the king, that the troops of Amhara, Angot, and Tigré should press upon the enemy from the high country, while he with his own troops (chiefly horse) should cut off their retreat to the plains of salt; and it was here that the king of Dancali was afraid that they would interfere with his fresh water.

THIS

* A race of very barbarous people, all shepherds, having great substance, and much resembling the nations of Galla. They are Pagans.

THIS prince kept strictly his promise of secrecy made to Bæda Mariam, while the king of Adel observed a very different line of conduct; for he not only discovered the king's intention, but he invited the Dobas to send their wives, children, and effects into Adel, while his troops should cut off the king's provision, and fight him wherever they saw that it could be done with advantage. The plan was speedily embraced. Twelve clans of Dobas marched with their cattle, as privately as possible, for Adel; but the king's intelligence was too good, and his motions too rapid, to allow their schemes to be carried into execution. With a large body of horse, he took possession of a strong pass, called Fendera; and when that unhappy people, fatigued with their march, and incumbered with baggage, arrived at this spot, they were cut to pieces without resistance, and without distinction of age or sex.

THE king, at the beginning of this campaign, declared, that his intention was not to carry on war with the Dobas as with an ordinary enemy, but totally to extirpate them as a nuisance; and, to shew himself in earnest in the declaration, he now made a vow never to depart from the country till he had plowed and sown the fields, and ate the crop on the spot with his army. He, therefore, called the peasants of two small neighbouring districts, Wadge and Ganz, and ordered them to plow and sow that part; which having been done, the king went to Axum, but returned again to the Dobas, by the feast of the Epiphany. That cruel, restless nation, saw now the king's real intent was their utter destruction, and that there was no possibility of avoiding it but by submission. This prudent conduct they immediately adopted; and, great part of them renouncing the Pagan religion,

religion, they so satisfied Bæda Mariam that he decamped from their country, after having, at his own expence, restored to them a number of cattle equal to that which he had taken away, having also given up, untouched, the crop which had been sown, and recompensed the peasants of Wadge and Ganz for their corn and labour.

HAVING resolved to chastise the king of Adel for his treacherous conduct, he retired southward into the provinces Dawaro and Ifat ; and, as if he had had no other views but those of peace, he crossed over to Begemder, where he directed the Abuna to meet him with his young son Iscander, of whom his queen, Romana Werk *, had been lately delivered. From this he proceeded to Gojam, everywhere leaving orders with the proper officers to have their troops in readiness against his return ; and having delivered the young prince to Ambasa David, governor of that province, he proceeded to Gimbota, a town lying on the banks of the Nile, which, in honour of his son's governor, he changed to David Harasa †. Having thus settled the prince to his mind, he sent orders to the army in Tigré and Dawaro to advance into the southernmost frontier of Adel. He himself returned by the way he went to Gojam, and collecting the troops, and the nobility who flocked to him on that occasion, he marched straight for the same country.

WHILST the king was occupied in these warlike preparations, a violent commotion arose among his clergy at home. In the reign of Zara Jacob, a number of strangers, after the council

* The pomegranate of gold.

† The station of David.

council of Florence, had come into Abyſſinia with the Abuna Imaranha Chriſtos. Among theſe were ſome monks from Syria, or Egypt, who had propagated a hereſy which had found many diſciples. They denied the conſubſtantiality of Chriſt, whom they admitted to be perfect God and likewiſe perfect man, but maintained that what we call his *humanity* was a precious ſubſtance, or nature, not compoſed of fleſh, blood, and arteries, (like ours), but infinitely more noble, perfect, peculiar to, and only exiſting in himſelf. An aſſembly of the clergy was called, this hereſy condemned, and thoſe who had denied the perfect manhood of our Saviour were put to death by different kinds of torture. Some were ſent to die in the Kolla, others expoſed, without the neceſſaries of life, to periſh with cold on the tops of the higheſt mountains.

THERE was another motive of diſcontent which appeared in that aſſembly, and which affected the king himſelf. A Venetian, whoſe name was Branca Leon, was one of the ſtrangers that arrived in Ethiopia at the time above mentioned. He was a limner by profeſſion, and exceedingly favoured by the late king, for whom he had painted, with great applauſe, the pictures of Abyſſinian ſaints for the decoration of the churches. It happened that this man was employed for an altar-piece of Atrona Mariam ; the ſubject was a common one in Italy, Chriſt in his mother's arms ; where the child, according to the Italian mode, is held in his mother's left arm. This is directly contrary to the uſage of the Eaſt, where the left hand is reſerved for the purpoſe of waſhing the body when needful, and is therefore looked upon with diſhonour, ſo much, indeed, that at table the right hand only is put into the plate.

THE fanatic and ignorant monks, heated with the last dispute, were fired with rage at the indignity which they supposed was offered to our Saviour. But the king, struck with the beauty of the picture, and thinking blood enough had been already shed upon religious scruples, was resolved to humour the spirit of persecution no farther. Some of the ring-leaders of these disturbances privately disappearing, the rest saw the necessity of returning to their duty; and the picture was placed on the altar of Atronsa Mariam, and there preserved, notwithstanding the devastation of the country by the Moors under the reigns of David III. and Claudius, till many years afterwards, together with the church, it was destroyed by an inroad of the Galla.

IN the mean time, the army from Dawaro had entered the kingdom of Adel under Betwudet * Adber Yafous, and, expecting to find the Moors quite unprepared, they had begun to waste every thing with fire and sword. But it was not long before they found the inhabitants of Adel ready to receive them, and perfectly instructed of the king's intentions, from the moment he left Dawaro, to go to meet his son in Cojam. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, from the multitude of Moors constantly in his army, who, though they put on the appearance of loyalty, never ceased to have a warm heart towards their own religion and countrymen. Advanced parties appeared as soon as the Abyssinian army entered the frontiers; and these were followed by the main body in good order, determined to fight their enemy before they had time to ravage the country.

A BATTLE

* Betwudet is an officer that has nearly the same power as Ras; there were two of these, and both being slain at one battle, as we shall see in the sequel, the office grew into disuse as unfortunate.

A BATTLE immediately followed, very bloody, as might be expected from the mutual hatred of the foldiers, from the equality in numbers, and the long experience each had in the other's manner of fighting. The battle, often on the point of being loft, was as often retrieved by the personal exertion of the Moorish officers, upon whom the lofs principally fell. Sidi Hamet, the king's fon, the chiefs of Arar, Nagal, Telga, Adega, Hargai, Gadai, and Kumo, were flain, with feveral other principal men, who had either revolted from the king of Abyffinia, or whom friendship to the king of Adel had brought from the opposite coaft of Arabia.

THE king was ftill advancing with diligence, when he was overtaken by an exprefs, informing him that his queen Romana was delivered of another prince, chriftened by the name of Anquo Ifrael. Upon which good tidings he halted at once to reft and feaft his army ; and, in the middle of the feftivity, an exprefs from Adber Yafous brought him news of the complete victory over the Moors, and that there was now no army in Adel of confequence enough to keep the field. Hereupon the king detached a fufficient number of troops to reinforce Adber Yafous in Adel, and continued himfelf recruiting his army, and making greater preparations than before, that, during the firft of the feafon, he might utterly lay wafte the whole Moorish country, or fo difable them that they might, for many years, be content to enjoy peace under the condition of becoming his tributaries.

WHILE planning thefe great enterprifes, the king was feized with a pain in his bowels, whether from poifon or other-

wife is not known, which occasioned his death. Having, a few moments before he died, recollected that his face was turned on a different side from the kingdom of Adel, he ordered himself to be shifted in his bed, and placed so as to look directly towards it, (a token how much his heart was set upon its destruction) and in that posture he expired.

HE was a prince of great bravery and conduct; very moderate in all his pleasures; of great devotion; zealous for the established church, but steady in resisting the monks and other clergy in all their attempts towards persecution, innovation, and independency. Many stories have been propagated of his inclination to the Catholic religion, and of his aversion to having an Abuna from Egypt; and it is said, that, during his whole reign, he obstinately persisted in refusing to suffer any Abuna in his kingdom. But these are fables invented by the Portuguese priests, who came into Abyssinia some time afterwards, and forged anecdotes to serve their own purposes; for, unless we except the story of the Venetian, Branca Leon, there is not a word said of any connection Bada Mariam ever had with the few Catholics that then were in his country, and even that was a connection of his father's. And as to the other story, we find in history, that the Abuna had been in the country ever since his father Zara Jacob's time; and that, at his desire, the Abuna, Imaranha Christos, came and received, in the field of battle, large donations in gold, almost as often as the king gained a victory. Bada Mariam died at the age of forty, after reigning ten years, which were spent in continual war; during the whole course of which he was successful, and might (if he had lived) have very much weakened the Moorish states, and prevented the terrible retaliation

tion that fell afterwards from that quarter upon his country.---It will be proper now to look back into the transactions in Europe, which are partly connected with the history of this kingdom.

THE conquest of the north part of Africa followed the reduction of Egypt, and the whole coast of Barbary was crowded with Mahometans, from Alexandria to the western ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the edge of the desert. Even the desert itself was filled with them; and trade, security, and good faith, were now everywhere disseminated in regions, a few years before the seat of murder and pillage.

TARIK and his Moors had invaded Spain; Musa followed him, and conquered it. The history of Count Julian is in every one's hand; unfortunate in having had the provocation, still more so in having had the power to revenge it, by sacrificing at once his sovereign, his country, religion, and life, to the private injuries done to his daughter. As often as I have read the history of this catastrophe, so often have I regretted to see with how little ceremony this young lady hath been treated by authors of all languages and nations. They call her *Caaba*, with the same ease and indifference as they would have called her Anne, or Margaret. This must be from mere ignorance. *Caaba* could not be the name of the daughter of Count Julian before her seduction. *Caaba* means *Harlot*, in the broadest way possible to express the term, and very cruelly and improperly, it seems to be given her, even after her misfortune; for she was a daughter of the first family in Spain, of unexceptionable virtue.

She was not seduced, but *forced* by the king, while in the palace, and under protection of the queen.

A GREAT influx of trade followed the conquest ; and the religion, that contained little restraint and great indulgence, was every where embraced by the vanquished, who long had been Christians in name only. On the other side, the conquerors were now no longer that brutish set of madmen, such as they were under the Khalifat of the fanatic Omar. They were now men eminent for their rank and attainments in every species of learning. This was a dangerous crisis for Christianity, and nothing else was threatened than its total subversion. The whole world, without the help of England, had not virtue enough to withstand this torrent. That nation, the favourite weapon in the hand of Heaven for chastising tyranny and extirpating false religion, now lent its assistance, and the scale was quickly turned.

At that time Europe saw with surprise an inconsiderable number of fishermen, very inconveniently placed at the farthest end of the Adriatic Gulf, applying themselves with unwearied care and patience to cultivate, gather together, and improve the remnants and gleanings of the Indian trade by Alexandria, under all the cruelties and oppressions of those ignorant and barbarous conquerors the Turks, whom no prospect of gain, no change of place, no frequency of commerce, could ever civilize or subject to the rules of justice. Venice became at once the great market for spices and perfumes, and consequently the most considerable maritime power that had appeared in Europe for ages.

GENOA followed, but sunk, after great efforts, under the power of her rival; while Venice remained mistress of the sea, of a large dominion upon the continent, and of the Indian spice trade, the origin and support of all her greatness.

RHODES, and the ships of the Military Order of St John of Jerusalem, to whom that island belonged, greatly harrassed the maritime trade carried on by the Moors in their own vessels from Alexandria, who were every day more discouraged by the unexpected progress of these *once petty* Christian states. Trade again began to be carried on by caravans in the desert. Large companies of merchants from Arabia, passed in safety to the western ocean, and were joined by other traders from the different parts of Barbary while passing to the southward of them, and that with such security and expedition, that the Moors began to set little value on their manner of trading by sea, content now again with the labours and conveniencies of their ancient, faithful friend, and servant, the camel.

ORMUS, a small island in the Persian Gulf, had, by its convenient situation, become the market for the spice trade, after the discouragements it had received in the Mediterranean. All Asia was supplied from thence, and vessels, entering the Straits of Babelmandeb, had renewed the old resort to the temple of Mecca. From hence all Africa, too, was served by caravans, that never since have forsaken that trade, but continue to this day, and cross the continent, in various directions.

JOHN I. king of Portugal, after many successful battles with the Moors, had at last forced them to cross the sea, and return vanquished to their native country. By this he had changed his former dishonourable name of *bastard* to the more noble and much more popular one of John the *avenger*. This did not satisfy him. Assisted by some English navigators, he passed over to Barbary laid siege to Ceuta, and speedily after made himself master of the city. This early connection with the English arose by his having married Philipina of Lancaster, sister of Henry IV. king of England, by whom he had five sons, all of them heroes, and, at the taking of Ceuta, capable of commanding armies. Henry, the youngest, scarce twenty years of age, was the first that mounted the walls of that city in his father's presence, and was thereupon created Master of the Order of Christ, a new institution, whose sole end and view was the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

ALTHOUGH every thing promised fair to John in the war of Africa, yet it early occurred to prince Henry, that a small kingdom like Portugal never could promise to do any thing effectual against the enormous power of the Mahometans, then in possession of extensive dominions in the richest parts of the globe. The sudden rise of Venice was before his eyes, and almost happened in his own time. By applying to trade alone, she had acquired a power sufficient to cope with the stoutest of her enemies. Portugal, small as it was, merited quite another degree of respect; but poverty, ignorance, pride, and idleness prevailed among the poor people; even agriculture itself was in a manner abandoned since the expulsion of the Moors.

PRINCE HENRY, from his early years, had been passionately addicted to the study of what is generally known by the name of *mathematics*, that is, geometry, astronomy, and consequently arithmetic. He was of a liberal turn of mind, devoid of superstition, haughtiness, or passion; the Arab and the Jew were admitted to him with great freedom, as the only masters who were capable of instructing him in those sciences. It was in vain to attempt to rival Venice in possession of the Mediterranean trade: no other way remained but to open the commerce to India by the Atlantic Ocean, by sailing round the point of Africa to the market of spices in India. Full of this thought, he retired to a country palace, and there dedicated the whole of his time to deliberate inquiry. The ignorance and prejudices of the age were altogether against him. The only geography then known was that of the poets. It was the opinion of the Portuguese, that the regions within the tropics were totally uninhabited, scorched by eternal sun-beams, while boiling oceans washed these burning coasts; and, therefore, they concluded, that every attempt to explore them was little better than downright madness, and a braving, or tempting, of Providence.

BUT, on the other hand, he found great materials to comfort him, and to make him persist in his resolution. For Greek history, to which he then had access, had recorded two instances, which shewed that the voyage was not only possible, but that it had been actually performed, first by the Phœnicians, under Necho king of Egypt, then by Eudoxus, during the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, who, after doubling the southern Cape of Africa, arrived in safety at Cadiz. Hanno, too, had sailed from Carthage through the Straits, and reached

reached to 25° of north latitude in the Atlantic Ocean. In more modern times, even in the preceding century, Macham, an Englishman, returning from a voyage on the west coast of Africa, was shipwrecked on the island of Madeira, together with a woman whom he tenderly loved. After her death he became weary of solitude; and having constructed a bark, or canoe, with which he paddled over to the opposite coast, he was taken by the natives, and presented to the Caliph as a curiosity. And the Normans of Dieppe had, as a company, traded in 1364, not fourscore years from prince Henry's time, as far as Sierra de Leona, only 7° from the Line.

THE prince's humanity to his Moorish prisoners had likewise been rewarded by substantial information; they reported that some of their countrymen of the kingdom of Sus had advanced far into the desert, carrying their water and provisions along with them on camels; that, after many days travel, they came to mines of salt, and, having loaded their cargoes, they proceeded till they came within the limits of the rains; there they found large and populous towns, inhabited by a people totally black and woolly-headed, who reported that there were many countries even beyond them, occupied by numerous and warlike tribes. To complete all, Don Pedro, Henry's brother, returning from Venice, brought along with him from that city a map, on which the whole coast of the Atlantic Ocean was distinctly traced, and the southern extremity of Africa was represented to be a cape surrounded with the sea, which joined with the Indian Ocean.

No sooner was the prince thus satisfied of the possibility of a passage to India round Africa, than he set about con-

fructing the necessary instruments for navigation. He corrected the solar tables of the Arabs, and made some alterations in the astrolabe: For, strange to tell! the quadrant was not then known in Portugal, though, a hundred years before, Ulughbeg had measured the sun's height at Samarcand in Persia, with a quadrant of about 400 feet radius, the largest ever constructed, if, indeed, the size of this be not exaggerated.

HENRY, who, by his liberality and affability, had drawn together the most learned mathematicians and ablest pilots of the age, now proposed to reduce his speculations to practice. Many ships had failed in the course of his disquisitions, and ten years had now elapsed before the prince, after all his encouragement, could induce the captains to proceed farther than Cape Non, or, thirty leagues further, to Cape Bojador. To this their courage held good; after which, the fear of fiery oceans reviving in their minds, they returned exceedingly satisfied with their own perseverance and abilities. Henry, though greatly hurt at this behaviour, dissimbled the low opinion which he had formed of both. He contented himself with proposing to them different reasons and rewards; and urged them to repeat their voyages, which, however, constantly ended in the same disappointment. And it is probable a much longer time might have been spent in these miscarriages, had not accident, or rather providence, stepped in to his assistance.

JOHN GONSALEZ and Tristan Vaz, two gentlemen of his bed-chamber, seeing the impression this behaviour had made on the prince, and having obtained a small ship from him, resolved to double Cape Bojador, and discover the coast

yond it. Whether the fiery oceans might not have presented themselves to these gentlemen, I know not; but a violent storm forced them to sea. After being tossed about in perpetual fear of shipwreck for several days, they at last landed on a small island, which they called Port Santo. These two navigators possessed the true spirit of discovery. Far from giving themselves up for lost in a new world, or content with what they had already done, they set about making the most diligent observation of every thing remarkable in this small spot. The island itself was barren; but, examining the horizon all around, they observed a black fixed spot there, which never either changed its place or dimensions. Satisfied, therefore, that this was land, they returned to the Infant with the news of this double discovery.

THREE vessels were speedily equipped by the prince; two of them given to Vaz and Arco, and the third to Bartholomew Perestrello, gentleman of the bed-chamber to Don John his brother. These adventurers were far from disappointing his expectations; they arrived at Port Santo, and proceeded to the fixed spot, which they found to be the island of Madeira, wholly covered with wood; an island that has ever since been of the greatest use to the trade of both Indies, and which has remained to the crown of Portugal, after the greatest part of their other conquests in the east are lost. John I. was now dead, and Edward had succeeded him. The infant Henry, however, still continued the pursuit of his discoveries with the greatest ardour.

GILES D'ANEZ, stimulated by the success of the last adventures, put to sea with a resolution to double Cape Bojador close in shore, so as to make his voyage a foundation

for pushing farther the discovery; and, being lucky in good weather, he fairly doubled the Cape; and, continuing some leagues farther into the bay to the south of it, he returned with the same good fortune to Portugal, after having found the ocean equally as navigable on the other side as on this; and that there was no foundation for those monstrous appearances or difficulties mariners till now had expected to find there.

THE successful expedition round Cape Bojador being soon spread abroad through Europe, excited a spirit of adventure in all foreigners; the most capable of whom resorted immediately to prince Henry, from their different countries, which further increased the spirit of the Portuguese, already raised to a very great height. But there still was a party of men, who, not susceptible of great actions themselves, dedicated their time with some success to criticising the enterprises of others. These blamed prince Henry, because, when Portugal was exhausted both of men and money by a necessary war in Africa, he should have chosen that very time to launch out into expences and vain discoveries of countries, in an immense ocean, which must be useless, because incapable of cultivation. And though they did not advance, as formerly, that the ocean was boiling among burning sands, they still thought themselves authorised to assert, that these countries must, from their situation under the sun, be so hot as to turn all the discoverers black, and also to destroy all vegetation. Futile as these reasons were, at another time they would have been sufficient to have blasted all the designs of prince Henry, had they made half the impression upon the king that they did upon the minds of the people. Portugal was then only *growing* to the pitch

of heroism to which it soon after arrived, their spirit being continually fostered by a long succession of wise, brave, and well-informed princes.

EDWARD, the reigning prince, disdained to give any answer to such objections, otherwise than by doubling his respect and attention for his uncle Henry. To encourage him still further, he conferred upon him for life the sovereignty of Madeira, Port Santo, and all the discoveries he should make on the coast of Africa; and the spiritual jurisdiction of the island of Madeira, upon his new Order of Christ, for ever.

THESE voyages of discovery were constantly persevered in. Nugno Trifan doubled Cape Blanco, and came to a small river, which, from their finding gold in the hands of the natives, was afterwards called *Rio del Oro*; and here a fort was afterwards built by the Portuguese, called *Arguim*. I would not, however, have it supposed, that gold is the produce of any place in the latitude of Cape Blanco. It was brought here from the black nations, far to the southward, to purchase salt from the mines which are in this desert near the Cape. The sight of gold, better than any argument, served to calm the fears, and overcome the scruples, of those who hitherto had been adversaries to these discoveries.

IN the year 1445, Denis Fernandes first discovered the great river Senega, the northern banks of which are inhabited by Asenagi Moors, whose colour is tawny, while the southern, or opposite banks, belong to the Jaloffes, or Negro nation, the chief market for the gum-arabic. Passing this river he discovered Cape Verde; and, to his inexpressible satisfaction,

satisfaction, though now in the midst of the torrid zone, he found the country abounded with large rivers, and with the most luxuriant verdure. He found a civil war in the nation of Jaloffes. Bemoy, a prince of that nation, had, in a minority, intruded himself into the throne of his brothers, (to whom he was but half blood), by the address of his mother. The eldest of the three brothers preserved the shadow of government, and seemed to favour the usurpation. Bemoy had improved that interval by cultivating the Portuguese friendship to the uttermost. He promised every thing; a place to build their city on the continent, which the king very much desired; and to be a convert to Christianity, the only thing the king wished still more. His eldest brother dying, the king was briskly pressed by the two younger, and steadily supported by the Portuguese, from whom he had borrowed large sums; but still appearing to trifle with the day of his conversion, and the day of his payment, the king ordered the Portuguese to withdraw from his country, and leave him to his fortune. The loss of a battle with his brothers soon reduced him to the necessity of flying across the deserts to Arguim, and thence to Portugal, with a number of his followers. He was received by the king of Portugal with all the honours due to a sovereign prince, and baptised at Lisbon, the king and queen being his sponsors.

GREAT festivals and illuminations were made at this acquisition to Christianity; and Bemoy appeared at those festivals as the greatest ornament of them, performing feats of horsemanship never before practised in Portugal. The modesty and propriety of his conversation and behaviour in private, and the great dignity and eloquence which he

displayed in public, began to give the Portuguese a very different idea of his clan from that which they had formerly entertained.

IN the mean time the king went rapidly on with the preparations that were to establish Bemoy in his kingdom; and the festivals were no sooner terminated, than Bemoy found a large army and fleet ready to sail with him, the command of which, unhappily for him and the expedition, was given to Trifan d'Acugna, a soldier of great experience and courage, but proud, passionate, and cruel; the disagreeable name of Bifagudo* had already been fixed upon him by his countrymen.

THE fleet performed the voyage, and the troops landed happily. They were, by their number and valour, far from any apprehension of opposition. The general began immediately to lay the foundation of a fort, without having sufficiently attended to its unhealthy situation. The spot which was chosen being low and marshy, fevers began early to make havock among his men, and the work of course went on proportionably slower. The murmurs of the army against his obstinacy in adhering to the choice of this place, and his fear that he himself should be left alone governor of it, made D'Acugna desperate; when one day, taking his pleasure on board a ship, and having had some words with Bemoy, he stabbed him with his dagger to the heart, so that he fell dead without uttering a word. The fort was abandoned, and the army returned to Portugal, after

* The literal translation of this is, *devilly sharp*, or *sharp to a fault*; a character he had gained in Portugal.

ter having cost little less than all prince Henry's discoveries together had done.

BUT Heaven rewarded the wisdom of the king by a discovery, the consequences of which more than overpaid him, in his mind, for his loss. Prince Henry's principal view was to discover the way to India by the southern Cape of Africa; but this as yet was not known to be possible. In order to remedy a disappointment, if any such happened in this sea-voyage, another was attempted by land. We have seen that the common track for the Indian trade was from the east to the west sea, through the desert, the whole breadth of Africa. Prince Henry had projected a route parallel to this to the southward, through a Christian country: For it had been long reported by the Christians from Jerusalem, that a number of monks resorted thither, subjects of a Christian prince in the very heart of Africa, whose dominions were said to reach from the east to the west sea. Several of these monks had been met at Alexandria, whose patriarch had the sole right to send a metropolitan into that country. These facts, though often known, had been as often forgot by the western Christians. Marco Paulo*, a Venetian traveller, had much confused the story, by saying he had met, in his travels through Tartary, with this prince, who they all agreed was a priest, and was called Joannes Presbyter Prete Janni, or Prester John.

THE king of Portugal, therefore, chose Peter Covillan and Alphonso de Paiva for his ambassadors. Covillan was a man
qualified

* See Marco Paulo's Travels into Tartary.

qualified for the undertaking. He had several times been employed by the late king in very delicate affairs, out of which he extricated himself with great credit by his address and secrecy. He was, besides this, in the vigour of his age, bold, active, and perfectly master of all sorts of arms; modest and chearful in conversation, and, what crowned all, had happily a great readiness in acquiring languages, which enabled him to explain himself wherever he went, without an interpreter; an advantage to which, above all others, we are to ascribe the success of such a journey.

It was at the court of Bemoy that the first certain account of the existence of this Christian prince was procured. This people, on the west coast of Africa, reported, that, inland to the eastward, were many powerful nations and cities, governed by princes totally independent of each other; that the easternmost of these princes was called prince of the Mofaical people, who were neither Pagans nor Idolaters, but professed a religion compounded of the Christian and Jewish.

It seems plain that this intelligence must have been brought by the caravans; or, indeed, the case may have been that the language of the Negroes had, of old, been a dialect of Abyssinian. The black Ethiopians above Thebes are reported to have bestowed much care upon letters; and they certainly reformed the hieroglyphics, and probably invented the Syllabic alphabet, which we know is used in Abyssinia to this day, and which was probably the first among the nations. Be that as it will, the various names which the Senega went by were all Abyssinian words. Senega comes from Asenagi, which is Abyssinian, and signifies *carriers*,

riers, or caravans; *Dengui, a stone, or rock*; *Angueah, a tree of that name*; *Anzo, a crocodile*; and, at the same time, all these are names of Abyssinian rivers.

It was at Benin, another Negro country, that the king again received a confirmation of the existence of a Christian prince, who was said to inhabit the heart of Africa to the south-east of this state. The people of Benin reported him to be a prince exceedingly powerful; that his name was Ogané, and his kingdom about 250 leagues to the eastward. They added, that the kings of Benin received from him a brass cross and a staff as their investiture. It should seem that this Ogané is but a corruption of Jan, or Janhoi, which title the eastern Christians had given to the king of Abyssinia. But it is very difficult to account for the knowledge of Abyssinia in the kingdom of Benin, not only on account of the distance, but likewise, because several of the most savage nations of the world, the Galla and Shangalla, occupy the intervening space.

THE court of Abyssinia, as we shall see afterwards, did, indeed, then reside in Shoa, the south-east extremity of the kingdom, and, by its power and influence, probably might have pushed its dominion through these barbarians, down to the neighbourhood of Benin on the western ocean. But all this I must confess to be a simple conjecture of mine, of which, in the country itself, I never found the smallest confirmation.

AMHA YASOUS (prince of Shoa) being at court, on a visit to the king at Gondar, in the years 1770 and 1771, and the strictest friendship subsisting between us, every endeavour

possible was used on my part to examine this affair to the bottom. A number of letters were written, and messengers sent; and, at this prince's desire, his father directed, that all the records of government should be consulted to satisfy me. But never any thing occurred which gave room to imagine the prince of Shoa had ever been sovereign of Benin, nor was the western ocean, or that state, known to them in my time. Yet the country alluded to could be no other than Abyssinia; and, indeed, the crooked staff, as well as the cross, corroborate this opinion, unless the whole was an invention of the Negroes, to flatter the king of Portugal.

THAT prince was resolved no longer to delay the discovery of the markets of the spice-trade in India, and the passage over land, through Abyssinia, to the eastern ocean. He, therefore, as has been before said, dispatched Covillan and de Paiva to Alexandria, with the necessary letters and credit. They had likewise a map, or chart, given them, made under the direction of prince Henry, which they were to correct, or to confirm, according as it needed. They were to enquire what were the principal markets for the spice, and particularly the pepper-trade in India; and what were the different channels by which this was conveyed to Europe; whence came the gold and silver, the medium of this trade; and, above all, they were to inform themselves distinctly, whether it was possible to arrive in India by sailing round the southern promontory of Africa.

FROM Alexandria these two travellers proceeded to Cairo, thence to Suez, the port on the bottom of the Red Sea, where joining a caravan of western Moors, they continued their

route to Aden, a rich trading town, without the Straits of Babelmandeb. Here they separated: Covillan set sail for India, De Paiva for Suakem, a small trading town and island in Barbaria, or Barabra of the ancients. What other circumstances occurred we know not, only that De Paiva, attempting his journey this way, lost his life, and was never more heard of.

COVILLAN, more fortunate, passed over to Calicut and Goa in India; then crossed the Indian Ocean to Sofala, to inspect the mines; then he returned to Aden, and so to Cairo, where he expected to meet his companion De Paiva; but here he heard of his death. However, he was there met by two Jews with letters from the king of Abyssinia, the one called Abraham, the other Joseph. Abraham he sent back with letters, but took Joseph along with him again to Aden, and thence they both proceeded to Ormus in the Persian Gulf. Here they separated, and the Jew returned home by the caravans that pass along the desert to Aleppo. Covillan, now solely intent upon the discovery of Abyssinia, returned to Aden, and, crossing the Straits of Babelmandeb, landed in the dominions of that prince, whose name was Alexander, and whom he found at the head of his army, levying contributions upon his rebellious subjects. Alexander received him kindly, but rather from motives of curiosity than from any expectation of advantage which would result from his embassy. He took Covillan along with him to Shoa, where the court then resided.

COVILLAN returned no more to Europe. A cruel policy of Abyssinia makes this a favour constantly denied to strangers. He married, and obtained large possessions; continued

nued greatly in the favour of several succeeding princes, and was preferred to the principal offices, in which, there is no doubt, he appeared with all the advantage a polished and instructed mind has over an ignorant and barbarous one. Frequent dispatches from him came to the king of Portugal, who, on his part, spared no expence to keep open the correspondence. In his journal, Covillan described the several ports in India which he had seen; the temper and disposition of the princes; the situation and riches of the mines of Sofala: He reported that the country was very populous, full of cities both powerful and rich; and he exhorted the king to pursue, with unremitting vigour, the passage round Africa, which he declared to be attended with very little danger; and that the Cape itself was well known in India. He accompanied this description with a chart, or map, which he had received from the hands of a Moor in India, where the Cape, and cities all around the coast, were exactly represented.

UPON this intelligence the king fitted out three ships under Bartholomew Dias, who had orders to inquire after the king of Abyssinia on the western ocean. Dias passed on to lat. $24\frac{1}{2}$ deg. south, and there set up the arms of the king of Portugal in token of possession. He then sailed for the harbour of the Herdsmen, so called from the multitude of cows seen on land; and, as it should seem, not knowing whither he was going, came to a river which he called *Del Infante*, from the captain's name that first discovered it, having, without dreaming of it, passed that formidable Cape, the object so much desired by the Portuguese. Here he was tossed for many days by violent storms as he came near land, being more and more in the course of variable winds, but, obli-

nately persisting to discover the coast, he at last came within sight of the Cape, which he called the *Cape of Tempests*, from the rough treatment his vessel had met in her passage round it.

THE great end was now obtained. Dias and his companions had really suffered much, and, upon their return, they did not fail to do ample justice to their own bravery and perseverance; in doing this, they had conjured up so many storms and dreadful fights, that, all the remaining life of king John, there was no more talk but of this Cape: Only the king, to hinder a bad omen, instead of the Cape of Tempests, ordered it to be called the Cape of Good Hope.

ALTHOUGH the discovery now was made, there were not wanting a considerable number of people of the greatest consequence who were for abandoning it altogether; one of their reasons was curious, and what, if their behaviour afterwards had not been beyond all instance heroic, would have led us to imagine their spirit of religion and conquest had both cooled since the days of prince Henry. They were afraid, lest, after having discovered a passage to India, the depriving the Moorish states of their revenues from the spice-trade, should unite these powers to their destruction. Now, to destroy their revenues effectually, and thereby ruin their power, was the very motive which set prince Henry upon the discovery, as worthy the Grand Master of the Order of Christ; an order founded in the blood of unbelievers, and devoted particularly to the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

DON EMMANUEL, then king, having no such apprehensions, resolved to abide the consequences of a measure the most arduous ever undertaken by any nation, and which, though it had cost a great deal of time and expence, had yet succeeded beyond their utmost expectations. It was not till after long deliberation that he fixed upon Vasques de Gama, a man of the first distinction, remarkable for courage and great presence of mind. Before his departure, the king put into his hands the journal of Peter Covillan, with his chart, and letters of credit to all the princes in India of whom he had obtained any knowledge.

THE behaviour of Vasques de Gama, at parting, was far from being characteristic of the soldier or great man: his processions and tapers favoured much more of the ostentatious devotion of a bigotted little-minded priest, and was much more calculated to depress the spirits of his soldiers, than to encourage them to the service they were then about to do for their country. It served only to revive in their minds the hardships that Dias had met off the Terrible Cape, and persuade them there was in their expedition much more danger than glory. I would not be understood as meaning to condemn all acts of devotion before military expeditions, but would have them always short, ordinary, and uniform. Every thing further inspires in weak minds a sense of danger, and makes them despond upon any serious appearance of difficulty.

JULY 4th, 1497, Vasques, with his small fleet, sailed from Lisbon; and, as the art of navigation was considerably improved, he stood out to sea till he made the Canary Islands, and then those of Cape de Verde, where he anchored, took
in

in water and other refreshments. After which he was four months struggling with contrary winds and blowing weather, and at last obliged, through perfect fatigue, to run into a large bay called *St Helena**, in lat. $32^{\circ} 32'$ south. The inhabitants of this bay were black, of low stature, and their language not understood, though it afterwards was found to be the same with that of the Cape. They were clothed with skins of antelopes, which abounded in the country, since known to be that of the Hottentots; their arms were the horns and bones of beasts and fishes, for they had no knowledge of iron.

THE Portuguese were unacquainted with the trade-winds in those southern latitudes; and Vasques had departed for India, in a most unfavourable season of the year. The 16th of November they sailed for the Cape with a south-west wind; but that very day, the weather changing, a violent storm came on, which continued increasing; so, although on the 18th they discovered their long-desired Cape, they did not dare or attempt to pass it. Then it was seen how much stronger the impressions were that Dias had left imprinted in their minds, than those of duty, obedience, and resignation, which they had so pompously vowed at the chapel, or hermitage. All the crew mutinied, and refused to pass farther; and it was not the common sailors only; the pilots and masters were at their head. Vasques, satisfied in his mind that there was nothing extraordinary in the danger, persevered to pass the Cape in spite of all difficulties; and the officers, animated with the same ardour, seized the
most

* On the west side of the peninsula on the Atlantic.

most mutinous of their masters and pilots, and confined them close below in heavy irons.

VASQUES himself, taking hold of the rudder, continued to steer the ship with his own hand, and stood out to sea, to the astonishment of the bravest seaman on board. The storm lasted two days, without having in the least shaken the resolution of the admiral, who, on the 20th of November, saw his constancy rewarded by doubling that Cape, which he did, as it were, in triumph, sounding his trumpets, beating his drums, and permitting to his people all sorts of pastimes which might banish from their minds former apprehensions, and induce them to agree with him, that the point had very aptly been called the Cape of Good Hope.

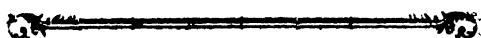
ON the 25th they anchored in a creek called *Angra de Saint Blaze*. Soon after their arrival there appeared a number of the inhabitants on the mountains, and on the shore. The general, fearing some surprise, landed his men armed. But, first, he ordered small brass bells, and other trinkets, to be thrown out of the boats on shore, which the blacks greedily took up, and ventured so near as to take one of them out of the general's own hand. Upon his landing, he was welcomed with the sound of flutes and singing. Vasques, on his part, ordered his trumpets to sound, and his men to dance round them.

ALL along from St Blaze, for more than sixty leagues, they found the coast remarkably pleasant, full of high and fair trees. On Christmas day they made land, and entered a river which they called *the river of the kings*; and all the distance

distance between this and St Blaze they named *Terra de Natal*. The weather being mild, they took to their boats to row along the shore, on which were observed both men and women of a large stature, but who seemed to be of quiet and civil behaviour. The general ordered Martin Alonzo, who spoke several languages of the Negroes, to land; and he was so well received by the chief, or king, that the admiral sent him several trifles, with which he was wonderfully pleased, and offered, in return, any thing he wanted of the produce of his country.

ON the 15th of January, in the year 1498, having taken in plenty of water, which the Negroes, of their own accord, helped them to put on board, they left this civil nation, steering past a length of coast terminated by a Cape called the *Cape of Currents*. There the coast of Natal ends, and that of Sofala begins, to the northward of the Cape. At this place, Gama from the south joined Covillan's track from the north, and these two Portuguese had completely made the circuit of Africa.





ISCANDER, OR ALEXANDER.

From 1478 to 1495.

Escander declares War with Adel—Good Conduct of the King—Betrayed and murdered by Za Saluce.

AS soon as the king Bæda Mariam was dead, the history of Abyssinia informs us, that a tumultuous meeting of the nobles brought from the mountain of Geshen the queen Romana, with her son Iscander, who upon his arrival was crowned without any opposition.

It is to be observed in the Abyssinian annals, that very frequent minorities happen. A queen-mother, or regent, with two or three of the greatest interest at court, are, during the minority, in possession of the king's person, and govern in his name. The transactions of this minority, too, are as carefully inserted in the annals of the kingdom as any other part of the subsequent government, but as the whole of these minorities are but one continued chain of quarrels, plots, and treachery, as soon as the king comes of age, the greatest part of this reign of his ministers is cancelled, as being the acts of subjects, and not worthy to be inserted.

inserted in their histories; which they entitle *Keëra Za Neguß*, the greatness or achievements of their kings. This, however political in itself, is a great disadvantage to history, by concealing from posterity the first cause of the most important transactions.

For several years after Iscander ascended the throne, the queen his mother, together with the Acab Saat, Tesfo Georgis, and Betwudet Amdu, governed the kingdom despotically under the name of the young king. Accordingly, after some years sufferance, a conspiracy was formed, at the head of which were two men of great power, Abba Amdu and Abba Hafabo, but the conspirators proving unsuccessful, some of them were imprisoned, some put to death, and others banished to unwholesome places, there to perish with hunger and fevers.

THE king from his early age had shewn a passionate desire for a war with Adel, and that prince, whose country had been so often desolated by the Abyssinian armies, omitted no opportunity of creating an interest at that court, that should keep things in a quiet state. In this, however, he was much interrupted at present by a neighbouring chief of Arar, named Maffudi. This man, exceedingly brave, capable of enduring the greatest hardships, and a very great bigot to the Mahometan religion, had made a vow, that, every Lent, he would spend the whole forty days in some part of the Abyssinian kingdom; and to this purpose he had raised, at his own expence, a small body of veteran troops, whom he inspired with the same spirit and resolution. Sometimes he fell on one part of the frontier, sometimes upon another; slaying, without mercy, all that made resistance,

refiflance, and driving off whole villages of men, women, and children, whom he fent into Arabia, or India, to be fold as flaves.

It was a matter of great difficulty for the king of Adel to perfuade the Abyffinians that Maffudi acted without his infligation. The young king was one who could not diftinguifh Adel from Arar, or Mahomet's army from Maffudi's. He bore with very great impatience the exceffes every year committed by the latter; but he was over-ruled by his nobility at home, and his thoughts turned as much as poffible to hunting, to which he willingly gave himfelf up; and, tho' but fifteen years of age, was the perfon, in all Abyffinia, moft dexterous at managing his arms. At laft, being arrived at the age of feventeen, and returning from having obferved a very fucceffful expedition made by Maffudi againft his territories, he ordered Za Saluce, his firft minifter, commander in chief, and governor of Amhara, to raife the whole forces to the fouthward, while he himfelf collected the nobility in Angot and Tigré. With thofe, as foon as the rainy feafon was over, he defcended into the kingdom of Adel.

THE king of Adel had been forced into this war, yet, like a wife prince, he was not unprepared for it. He had advanced directly towards the king, but had not paffed his frontiers. Some inhabitants of a village called *Arno*, all Mahometans, but tributary to the king of Abyffinia, had murdered the governor the king had fet over them. Ifcander marched directly to deftroy it, which he had no fooner accomplifhed, than the Moorifh army prefented itfelf. The battle was maintained obftinately on both fides, till the troops under
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Za Saluce withdrew in the heat of the engagement, leaving the king in the midst of his enemies. This treason, however, seemed to have inspired the small army that remained with new courage, so that the day was as yet dubious, when Ifcander, being engaged in a narrow pass, and seeing himself close pressed by a Moor who bore in his hand the green standard of Mahomet, turned suddenly upon him, and slew him with a javelin; and, having wrested the colours from him as he was falling, he, with the point of the spear that bore the ensign, struck the king of Adel's son dead to the ground, which immediately caused the Moors to retreat.

THE young prince was too prudent to follow this victory in the state the army then was; for that of Adel, though it had retreated, did not disperse. Za Saluce was returning by long marches to Amhara, exciting all those in his way to revolt; and it was high time, therefore, for the king to follow him. But, unequal as he was in strength to the Moors, he could not reconcile it with his own honour to leave their army masters of the field. He, therefore, first consulted the principal officers of his troops, then harangued his men, which, the historian says, he did in the most pathetic and masterly manner; so that, with one voice, they desired instantly to be led to the Moors. The king is said to have ranged his little army in a manner that astonished the oldest officers. He then sent a defiance to the Moors, by several prisoners whom he released. They, however, more desirous to keep him from ravaging the country than to fight another battle, continued quiet in their tents; and the king, after remaining on the field till near noon, drew off his troops in the presence of his enemy, making a retreat.

treat which would not have been unworthy of the hero whose name he bore.

THE king, in his return to Shoa, left his troops, which was the northern army, in the northern provinces, as he passed; so that he came to Shoa with a very small retinue, hearing that Za Saluce had gone to Amhara. This traitor, however, had left his creatures behind him, after instructing them what they were to do. Accordingly, the second day after Iscander's arrival in Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, they set upon him, during the night, in a small house in Aylo Meidan, and murdered him while he was sleeping. They concealed his body for some days in a mill, but Taka Christos, and some others of the king's friends, took up the corpse and exposed it to the people, who, with one accord, proclaimed Andreas, son of Iscander, king; and Za Saluce and his adherents, traitors.

IN the mean time, Za Saluce, far from finding the encouragement he expected in Amhara, was, upon his first appearance, set upon by the nobility of that province; and, being deserted by his troops, he was taken prisoner; his eyes were put out, and, being mounted on an ass, he was carried amidst the curses of the people through the provinces of Amhara and Shoa.

ISCANDER was succeeded by his son Andreas, or Amda Sion, an infant, who reigned seven months only.

A WONDERFUL confusion seems to be introduced at this time into history, by the Portuguese writers. Iscander is said to die in the 1490. He began, as they say, to reign

in 1475, and this is confirmed by Ludolf; and, on all hands, it is allowed he reigned 17 years, which would have brought the last year of his reign to 1492. It seems also to be agreed by the generality of them, that Covillan saw and conversed with this prince, Iscander, some time before his death: this he very well might have done, if that prince lived to the 1492, and Peter Covillan came into Abyssinia in 1490, as Galvan says in his father's memoirs. But then Tellez informs us expressly, that Iscander was dead 6 months before the arrival of Peter Covillan in that country: If Peter Covillan arrived 6 months after the death of Iscander, it must have been in the end of his son's reign, Amda Sion, who was an infant, and reigned only 7 months.

ALVAREZ omits this king, Amda Sion, altogether, and so does Tellez; and there is a heap of mistakes here that shew these Portuguese historians paid very little attention to the chronology of these reigns. They call Alexander the father of Naod, when he was really but his brother; and Helena, they say, was David's mother, when, in fact, she was his grandmother, or rather his grandfather's wife; for Helena, who was Iteghé in the time of David the III. had never either son or daughter. So that if I differ, as in fact I do, 4 years, or thereabout, in this account, I do not think in those remote times, when the language and manner of accounting was so little known to these strangers, that I, therefore, should reject my own account and fervently adopt theirs, and the more so, because, as we shall see in its proper place, by the examination and comparison made by help of an eclipse of the sun in the 13th year of Claudius' reign in the 1553, and counting from that downwards to my arrival in Abyssinia, and backwards to Iscander, that that prince must have be-

gun his reign in 1478, and reigning 17 years, did not die till the year 1495, and therefore must have seen Peter Covillan, and conversed with him, if he had arrived in Abyssinia so early as the 1490.

N A O D.

From 1495 to 1508.

Wise Conduct of the King—Prepares for a War with the Moors—Concludes an honourable Peace with Adel.

AFTER the unfortunate death of the young king Alexander, the people in general, wearied of minorities, unanimously chose Naod for their king. He was Alexander's younger brother, the difference of ages being but one year, though he was not by the same mother, but by the the king's second wife Calliope. He was born at a town called Gabargué, the day the royal army was cut off in his father's time, when both the Betwudets perished. From this circumstance, the Empress Helena and her party had used some underhand means to set him aside as unfortunate, and in his place to put Anquo Israel, Bæda Mariam's youngest son, that they might govern him and the kingdom during his non-age. But Taka Christos, their man of confidence, being, on his first declaration of such intentions, cut off by the army in Dawaro, Naod was immedi-

ately proclaimed, and brought from the mountain of Gethen.

ALTHOUGH Naod was in the prime of life, and vigorous both in body and mind, yet such were the circumstances of the kingdom at his accession, that it seemed a task too arduous for any one man. The continual intrigues of the empress, the quantity of Mahometan gold which was circulating on every occasion throughout the court, the little success the army had in Adel, as also the treachery of Za Saluce, and the untimely end of the young prince, who seemed to promise a remedy to the misfortunes, had so disunited the principal people in the government, that there did not seem a sufficient number of men worthy of trust to assist the king with their councils, or fill, with any degree of dignity, the places that were vacant.

NAOD was no sooner seated on the throne than he published a very general and comprehensive amnesty. By proclamation he declared, "That any person who should upbraid another with being a party in the misfortunes of past times, or say that he had been privy to this or to that conspiracy, or had been a favourite of the empress, or a partizan of Za Saluce, or had received bribes from the Moors, should, without delay, be put to death." This proclamation had the very best effect, as it quieted the mind of every guilty person when he saw the king, from whom he feared an inquiry, cutting off all possible means by which it could be procured against him. Andreas a monk, a man of quality, and of very great consequence in that country, a relation of the king by his mother, having affected to talk lightly of the proclamation, the king sent for

him, and ordered the tip of his tongue to be cut off in his presence. This man, whose fault seems only to have been in his tongue, and of whom a very great character is given, lived in the succeeding reign to give the king a very distinguished proof of his attachment to his family, and love of his country.

NAOD having thus prudently quieted disturbances at home, turned his thoughts to the war with Maffudi; for the king of Adel himself had made his peace through mediation of the empress Helena; and this king, more politic than Alexander his brother, was willing to dissemble with the king of Adel, that he might fight his two adversaries singly: He, therefore, prepared a smaller army than was usual for the king to head, without suffering a Moor of any kind to serve in it.

It was known to a day when Maffudi was to enter upon his expeditions against Abyssinia. For near thirty years he had begun to burn the churches, and drive off the people and cattle on the first day of Lent; and, as Lent advanced, he with his army penetrated farther up the country. The Abyssinians are the strictest people in the world in keeping fasts. They are so austere that they taste no sort of animal food, nor butter, eggs, oil, or wine. They will not, though ever so thirsty, drink a cup of water till six o'clock in the evening, and then are contented, perhaps, with dry or sour leaven bread, the best of them only making use of honey; by which means they become so weak as to be unable to bear any fatigue. This was Maffudi's reason for invading the country in Lent, at which time scarce a Christian, through fasting, was able to bear arms.

NAOD, like a wise prince who had gained the confidence of his army, would not carry with him any man who did not, for that time, live in the same free and full manner he was used to do in festivals. He himself set the example ; and Andreas the monk, after taking upon himself a vow of a whole year's fasting for the success of the army, declared to them, that there was more merit in saving one Christian village from slavery, and turning Mahometan, than in fasting their whole lives.

THE king then marched against Maffudi ; and having taken very strong ground, as if afraid of his army's weakness, the Moors, contrary to advice of their leader, attacked the king's camp in the most careless and presumptuous manner. They had no sooner entered, however, by ways left open on purpose for them, than they found the king's army in order to receive them, and were so rudely attacked, that most of those who had penetrated into the camp were left dead upon the spot. The king continued the pursuit with his troops, retook all the prisoners and cattle which Maffudi was driving away, and advanced towards the frontiers of Adel, where ambassadors met him, hoping, on the part of the king, that his intention was not to violate the treaty of peace.

To this the king answered, That, so far from it, he would confirm the peace with them, but with this condition, that they must deliver up to him all the Abyssinians that were to be found in their country taken by Maffudi in his last expedition, adding, that he would stay fifteen days there to expect his answer. The king of Adel, desirous of peace, and

not a little terrified at the disaster of Maffudi, hitherto reckoned invincible, gathered together all the slaves as soon as possible, and returned them to the king.

NAOD having now, by his courage and prudence, freed himself from fear of a foreign war, returned home, and set himself like a wise prince to the reforming of the abuses that prevailed everywhere among his people, and to the cultivation of the arts of peace. He died a natural death, after having reigned 13 years.



DAVID III.

From 1508 to 1540.

David, an Infant, succeeds—Queen sends Matthew Ambassador to Portugal—David takes the Field—Defeat of the Moors—Arrival of an Embassy from Portugal—Disastrous War with Adel.

THE vigorous reign of Naod had at least suspended the fate of the whole empire; and, had it not been that they still persisted in that ruinous and dangerous measure of following minority with minority, by the election of children to the throne, it is probable this kingdom would have escaped the greatest part of those dismal calamities.

that

that fell upon it in the sequel. But the Itēghé Helena, and the Abuna Marcos, (now become her creature) had interest enough, notwithstanding the apparent necessities of the times, to place David son of Naod upon the throne, a child of eleven years old, that they might take upon themselves the government of the kingdom; whereas Anquo Ifrael (third son of Bæda Mariam) was of an age proper to govern, and whom they would have preferred to Naod for the same reason, merely because he was then a child.

BESIDES the desire of governing, another motive operated, which, however good in itself, was very criminal from the present circumstances. A peace with Adel was what the empress Helena constantly desired; for she could not see with indifference the destruction of her own country, far less contribute to it. She was herself by origin a Moor, daughter of Mahomet, governor for the king in Dawaro; had been suspected, so early as her husband's time, of preferring the welfare of her own country to that of the kingdom of Abyssinia.

THIS princess, perfectly informed of the interests of both nations, seems, in her whole conduct, to have acted upon the most judicious and sensible principles. She knew the country of Adel to be, by situation and interest, perfectly commercial; that part of Africa, the opposite Arabia, and the peninsula of the Indies, were but three partners joined in one trade; they mutually consumed each others produce; they mutually contributed to export the joint produce of the three countries to distant parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; which three continents then constituted the whole known world. When Adel was at peace with Abyssinia,
then

then the latter became rich, from the gold, ivory, coffee, cattle, hides, and all manner of provision, procured by the former from every part of the mountainous tract above it. Trade flourished and plenty followed it. The merchants carried every species of goods to the most distant provinces in safety, equally to the advantage of Abyssinia and Adel. These advantages, so sensibly felt, were maintained by bribery, and a constant circulation of Mahometan gold in the court of Abyssinia; the kingdom, however, thus prospered. A war with Adel, on the contrary, had its origin in a violent desire of a barbarous people, such as the Abyssinians were, to put themselves in possession of riches which their neighbours had gained by trade and industry.

SHE saw that, even in this the worst of cases, nothing utterly destructive could possibly happen to the Abyssinians; in their inroads into that country, they plundered the markets and got, at the risk of their lives, India stuffs of every kind, for which else they would have paid money. On the other hand, the people of Adel, when conquerors, acquired no stuffs, no manufactures, but the persons of the Abyssinians themselves, whom they carried into slavery, and sold in Arabia, and all parts of Asia, at immense profits. Next to gold they are the most agreeable and valuable merchandize in every part of the east; and these again, being chiefly the idle people who delighted in war, their absence promoted the more desirable event of peace.

In this state we see that war was but another species of commerce between the two countries, though peace was the most eligible state for them both; and this the empress Helena had constantly endeavoured to maintain, but could
not

not succeed among a people fond of war, by any other means, but by giving them a minor for their king, who was by the law of the land under her direction, as the country was, during his minority, under her regency.

ALTHOUGH this, the ordinary state of the empress's politics, had hitherto answered well between the kingdoms, when no other parties were engaged, the introduction of a third power, and its influence, totally changed that system. The Turks, an enemy not yet known in any formidable line by the southern part of Africa, or Asia, now appeared under a form that made all those southern states tremble.

SELIM, emperor of Constantinople, had defeated Canso el Gauri, Soidan of Egypt, and slain him in the field. After a second battle he had taken Cairo, the capital of that country; and, under the specious pretence of a violation of the law of nations, by Tomum Bey, the successor, who was said to have put his ambassadors to death, he had hanged that prince upon one of the principal gates of his own capital; and, by this execution, had totally destroyed the succession of the Mamalukes. Sinan Basha, the great general and minister of Selim, in a very few months over-ran all the peninsula of Arabia, to the verge of the Indian Ocean.

THESE people, trained to war, Mahomet had inspired with enthusiasm, and led them to the conquest of the East. Trade and luxury had, after that, disarmed and reduced them to much the same situation as, in a former age, they had been found by Augustus Cæsar. Sinan Basha, with a troop of veterans, had, by degrees extirpated the native princes of the country; those that resisted, by force; and those that submitted

submitted to him, by treachery; and in their place, in every principal town, he had substituted Turkish officers of confidence, strongly supported by troops of Janizaries, who knew no other government but martial law.

WAR had now changed its form entirely under these new conquerors. Muskets, and large trains of artillery, were introduced against javelins, lances, and arrows, the only arms then known in Arabia, and in the opposite continent of Abyssinia. A large fleet, crowded with soldiers, and filled with military stores, the very name of which, as well as their destructive qualities, were till now unknown in these southern regions, were employed by the Turks to extend their conquest to India, where, though by the superior valour of the Portuguese they were constantly disappointed in their principal object, they nevertheless, in their passage outward and homeward, reinforced their several posts in Arabia, from which they looked for assistance and protection, had any enemy placed himself in their way, or a storm, or other unexpected misfortune, overtaken them in their return.

THESE Janizaries lived upon the very bowels of commerce. They had, indeed, for a shew of protecting it, established customhouses in their various ports; but they soon made it appear, that the end proposed by these was only to give them a more distinct knowledge who were the subjects from whom they could levy the most enormous extortions. Jidda, Zibid, and Mocha, the places of consequence nearest to Abyssinia on the Arabian shore, Suakem, a sea-port town on the very barriers of Abyssinia, in the immediate way of their caravan to Cairo, on the African side, were each under

der the command of a Turkish *basha*, and garrisoned by Turkish troops sent thither from Constantinople by the emperors Selim and Soliman, his successors.

THE peaceable Arabian merchants, full of that good faith which successful commerce inspires, fled everywhere from the violence and injustice of these Turkish tyrants, and landed in safety their riches and persons on the opposite shore of the kingdom of Adel. The trade from India, flying from the same enemy, took refuge in Adel among its own correspondents, the Moorish merchants, during the violent and impolitic tyranny that everywhere took place under this Turkish oppression.

ZEYLA is a small island, on the very coast of Adel, opposite to Arabia Felix without the Straits of Babelmandeb, upon the entrance of the Indian Ocean. The Turks of Arabia, though they were blind to the cause, were sensible of the great influx of trade into the opposite kingdom. They took possession, therefore, of Zeyla, where they established what they called a Customhouse, and by means of that post, and galleys cruising in the narrow Straits, they laid the Indian trade to Adel under heavy contributions, that might, in some measure, indemnify them for the great desertion their violence and injustice had occasioned in Arabia.

THIS step threatened the very existence both of Adel and Abyssinia; and considering the vigorous government of the one, and the weak politics and prejudices of the other, it is more than probable the Turks would have subdued both Adel and Abyssinia, had they not, in India their chief object, met the Portuguese, strongly established, and governed

by a succession of kings who had not in any age their equals, and seconded by officers and soldiers who, for discipline, courage, love to their country, and affection to their sovereign were, perhaps, superior to any troops, or any set of individuals, that, as far as we can judge from history, have ever yet appeared in the world.

It was not now a time for a woman to reign, nor, which was the same thing, to place a child upon the throne. The empress Helena saw this distinctly; but her ambition made her prefer the love of reigning to the visible necessities and welfare of her country. She knew the progress and extent of the Portuguese power in India; and saw plainly there was no prospect, but in their assistance, at once to save both Abyssinia and Adel.

PETER COVILLAN, sent thither as ambassador by John king of Portugal, had, for two reigns, been detained in Abyssinia, with a constant refusal of leave to return. He was now become an object of curiosity rather than use. However, except his liberty, he had wanted nothing. The empress had married him nobly in the country; had given him large appointments, both as to profit and dignity. She now began to be sensible of the consequence of having with her a man of his abilities, who could open to her the method of corresponding effectually both with India and Portugal in their own language, to which, as well as to the persons to whom her letters were to be addressed, she was then an utter stranger.

SHE had about her court an Armenian merchant named Matthew, a person of great trust and discretion, who had
2. been

been long accustomed to go to the several kingdoms of the East upon mercantile commissions for the king and for his nobles. He had been at Cairo, Jerusalem, Ormus, Isfahan, and in the East Indies on the coast of Malabar; both in places conquered by the Portuguese, and in those that yet held out under their native Pagan princes. He was one of those factors which, as I have already said, are employed by the king and great men in Abyssinia to sell or barter, in the places above mentioned, such part of their revenue as are paid them in kind.

THESE men are chiefly Greeks, or Armenians, but the preference is always given to the latter. Both nations pay caratch, or capitation, to the Grand Signior, (whose subjects they are) and both have, in consequence, passports, protections, and liberty to trade wherever they please throughout the empire, without being liable to those insults and extortions from the Turkish officers that other strangers are.

THE Armenians, of all the people in the East, are those most remarkable for their patience and sobriety. They are generally masters of most of the eastern languages; are of strong, robust constitutions; of all people, the most attentive to the beasts and merchandise they have in charge; exceedingly faithful, and content with little. This Matthew, queen Helena chose for her ambassador to Portugal, and joined a young Abyssinian with him, who died in the voyage. He was charged with letters to the king, which, with the other dispatches, as they are long, and abound with fiction and bombast rather than truth and facts, I have not troubled myself to transcribe; they are, besides, in many printed collections*.

* Vide Marmol, vol. i. cap. 37.

It appears clearly from these letters, that they were the joint compositions of Covillan, who knew perfectly the manner of corresponding with his court upon dangerous subjects, and of the simple Abyssinian confidants of the empress Helena, who, unacquainted with embassies or correspondence with princes, or the ill consequence that these letters would be of to their ambassador and his errand, if they happened to be intercepted by an enemy, told plainly all they desired and wished to execute by the assistance of the Portuguese. Thus, in the first part of the letter, (which we shall suppose dictated by Covillan) the empress remits the description of her wants, and what is the subject of the embassy, to Matthew her ambassador, whom she qualifies as her confidential servant, instructed in her most secret intentions; desiring the king of Portugal to believe what he shall report from her to him in private, as if they were her own words uttered immediately from her to him in person. So far was prudent; such a conduct as we should expect from a man like Covillan, long accustomed to be trusted with the secret negotiations of his sovereign,

BUT the latter end of his dispatches (the work, we suppose, of Abyssinian statesmen) divulges the whole secret. It explains the motives of this embassy in the clearest manner, desiring the king of Portugal to send a sufficient force to destroy Mecca and Medina; to assist them with a sufficient number of ships, and to annihilate the Turkish power by sea; while they, by land, should extirpate all the Mahometans on their borders; and it stigmatizes these Mahometans, both Turks and Moors, with the most opprobrious names it was possible to devise.

WITH the first part of these dispatches, it is plain, Matthew, as an envoy, might have passed unmolested; he had only to give to the secret wishes of the empress, with which he was charged, what kind of mercantile colour he pleased. But the last part of the letter brought home to him a charge of the deepest dye, both of sacrilege and high-treason, that he meditated against the Ottoman empire, whose Raya* he was; and, there can be no doubt, had these letters been intercepted and read, Matthew's embassy and life would have ended together under some exquisite species of torture. This, indeed, he seems to have apprehended; as, after his arrival in India, he constantly refused to shew his dispatches, even to the Portuguese viceroy himself, from whom, in the instant, he had received very singular favour and protection.

THE king, when of age, never could be brought to acknowledge this embassy by Matthew; but, as we shall see, did constantly deny it. If we believe the Portuguese, the despair of the empress was so great, that she offered one-third of the kingdom to the king of Portugal if he relieved her. Nothing of this kind appears in the letters; but, if this offer was part of Matthew's private dispatches, we may see a reason why David did not wish to own the commission and offer as his.

MATTHEW had a safe passage to Dabul in India, but here his misfortunes began. The governor, taking him for a spy, confined him in close prison. But Albuquerque, then viceroys of India, residing at Goa, who had himself a design

* Is a subject paying Capitation.

upon Abyssinia, hearing that such a person, in such a character, was arrived, sent and took him out of the hands of the governor of Dabul, where his sufferings else would not have so quickly ended. All the Portuguese cried out upon seeing such an ambassador as Matthew sent to their master; sometimes they pretended that he was a spy of the Sultan, at other times he was an impostor, a cook, or some other menial servant.

ALBUQUERQUE treated with him privately before he landed, to make his commissions known to him; but he expressly refused shewing any letter unless to the king himself in Portugal. This behaviour hurt him in the eyes of the viceroy, who was therefore disposed, with the rest of his officers, to slight him when he should come ashore. But Matthew, now out of danger, and knowing his person to be sacred, would no longer be treated like a private person. He sent to let the viceroy, bishop, and clergy know, that, besides his consequence as an ambassador, which demanded their respect, he was the bearer of a piece of wood of the true cross, which he carried as a present to the king of Portugal; and, therefore, he required them, as they would avoid an imputation of sacrilege, to shew to that precious reliet the utmost respect, and celebrate its arrival as a festival. No more was necessary after this. The whole streets of Goa were filled with processions; the troops were all under arms; the viceroy, and the principal officers, met Matthew at his landing, and conveyed him to the palace, where he was magnificently lodged and feasted. But nothing could long overcome the prejudices the Portuguese had imbibed upon the first sight of him; and, notwithstanding he carried a piece of the true cross, both he and it soon fell into perfect oblivion:

vion: Nor was it till 1513, after he had staid three years in India, that he got leave to proceed to Portugal by a fleet returning home loaded with spices.

DAMIANUS GOEZ the historian, though apparently a man of good sense and candour, cannot conjecture why this Armenian was sent as an ambaffador, and wishes to be resolved why not an Abyffinian nobleman. But it is obvious from the character I have already given of him, there could be nobody in the emperors's power that had half his qualifications; and, besides, an Abyffinian nobleman would not have ventured to go, as knowing very well that everywhere beyond the limits of his own country he would have been without protection, and the first Turk in whose power he might have fallen would have sold him for a slave. In no other character is any of his nation seen, either in Arabia or India, and his master has no treaty with any state whatever. Add to this, that an Abyffinian speaks no language but his own, which is not understood out of his own country; and is absolutely ignorant even of the existence of other far distant nations.

BUT, besides, there was an Abyffinian sent with Matthew, who died; and here Damianus Goetz's wonder should cease.

THE same ill-fortune, which had attended Matthew in India, followed him in his voyage to Portugal. The Captains of the ships contended with each other who should behave worst to him; and, in the midst of all this ill-treatment, the ship which he was on board of arrived at Lisbon. The king, upon hearing the particulars of this ill usage, immediately put the offenders in irons, where they had, probably,

probably, lain during their lives, had they not been freed by the intercession of Matthew.

DAVID (as I have before observed) was only eleven years old* when he was placed upon the throne; and, at his inauguration, took the name of Lebna Denghel, or the Virgin's Frankincense; then that of Etana Denghel, or the Myrrh of the Virgin; and after that, of Wanag Segued, which signifies Reverenced, or Feared, among the Lions, with whom, towards the last of his reign, he resided in wilds and mountains more than with men.

DURING this minority, there was peace with Mahomet king of Adel. Maffudi still continued his depredations; and, by his liberality, had formed strong connections with the Turks in Arabia. In return for the number of slaves whom he had sent to Mecca, a green silk standard, (that of Mahomet and of the Faith), and a tent of black velvet, embroidered with gold, were sent him by the Sherriffe, the greatest honour a Mahometan could possibly receive, and he was also made Shekh of the island of Zeyla, which was delivering the key of Abyssinia to him.

It was not till David had arrived at sixteen years of age that the constant success of Maffudi, the honours bestowed upon him, and the gain which accrued from all his expeditions, had at last determined the king of Adel to break the peace with Abyssinia, and join him. These princes, with the whole Mahometan force, had fallen together upon
Dawaro,

* Vid. David's letter to Emanuel, king of Portugal 1524.

Dawaro, Ifat, and Fatigar; and, in one year, had driven away, and slain, above nineteen thousand Christians, subjects to the king. A terror was now spread over the whole kingdom, and great blame laid both upon the empress and the king, for sitting and looking timidly on, while the Turks and Moors, year after year, ravaged whole provinces without resistance.

THESE murmurs at last roused David, who, for his own part, had not suffered them willingly so long. He determined immediately to raise an army, and to command it in person: In vain the empress admonished him of his danger, and his absolute want of experience in matters of war; in vain she advised him to employ some of the old officers against the veteran Moorish troops.

THE king answered, That every officer of merit had been tried already, and baffled from beginning to end, so that the army had no confidence in them; that he was resolved to take his trial as the others had done, and leave the event where it ought to be left. Though the diviners all prophesied ill from this resolution of the king, the generality of the kingdom, and young nobility, flocked to his standard, rejoicing in a leader so near their own age. The middle-aged had great hopes of the vigour of that youth; and the old were not more backward, satisfied of the weight their years and experience must give them in the councils of a young king.

SELDOM a better army took the field; and the empress, from her own treasures, furnished every thing, even to superfluity, engaging all the people of consequence by giving them

in the most affable manner, presents in hand, and magnificent promises of recompence hereafter. Great as these preparations were, they had not made much impression among the confederates in Adel; and already the king had put himself at the head of his army, before the Moors seemed to think it worth their while to follow him. They were, indeed, at that very time, laying waste a part of the kingdom of Abyffinia. The king, then, by quick marches, advanced through Fatigar, as if he was going to Auffa, the capital of Adel.

BETWEEN Fatigar and the plain country of Adel there is a deep large valley, through which it was necessary the army should pass. Very steep mountains bound it on every side, whilst two openings (each of them very narrow) were the only passages by which it was possible to enter or go out. The king divided his army into two; he kept the best troops and largest body with himself, and sent Betwudet with the rest, as if they intended to fight the enemy before they gained the defiles. The Moors, on the other hand, terrified at what must happen if the king with his army marched into their defenceless country, accounted it a great escape to get into these very defiles before they were forced to an engagement. Betwudet, who desired no more, gave them their way, and, entering the valley behind them, encamped there. The king, at the other end, had done the same, unseen by the enemy, who thought he was advanced on his march to Auffa. The Moors were thus completely hemmed in, and the king's army vastly superior. He had ordered his tents to be left standing, with a body of troops in them, and these completely covered the only outlet to the valley.

valley, whilst Betwudet and his party had advanced considerably, and made much the same disposition.

THE king drew up his troops early in the morning, and offered the enemy battle, when the whole Abyssinian army was surpris'd to discover a backwardness in the Moors so unlike their behaviour at former times; well they might, when they were informed from whom that panic among the Moors came. Maffudi, a fanatic from the beginning, whether really deceived by such a prophecy, or rais'd to a pitch of pride and enthusiasm by the honours he had received, and desirous, by a remarkable death, to deserve the rank of martyr among those of his own religion, or from whatever cause it arose, came to the king of Adel, and told him, that his time was now come; that it had been prophesied to him long ago, that if, that year, he fought the king of Abyssinia in person, he was there to lose his life: That he knew, for certain, David was then present, having, with his own eyes, seen the scarlet tent, (a colour which is only used by the king); he desired, therefore, the king of Adel to make the best of his way through a less steep part of the mountain, which he shew'd him; to take his family and favourites along with him, and leave under his command the army to try their fortune with David. Mahomet, at no time very fond of fighting, never found himself less so than upon this advice of Maffudi's. He resolv'd, therefore, to follow his council; and, before the battle began, withdrew himself through the place that was shewn him, and was followed by a few of his friends.

It was now 9 o'clock, and the sun began to be hot, before which the Abyssinians never choose to engage, when

Maffudi, judging the king of Adel was beyond danger, sent a trumpet to the Abyssinian camp, with a challenge to any man of rank in the army to fight him in single combat, under condition that the victory should be accounted to belong to that army whose champion was victorious, and that, thereupon, both parties should withdraw their troops without further bloodshed. It does not appear whether the conditions were agreed to, but the challenge was accepted as soon as offered. Gabriel Andreas the monk, who, in the reign of Naod, had, by the king's order, lost a part of his tongue for giving it too much licence, offered himself first to the king, beseeching him to trust to him that day, his own honour, and the fortune of the army. The king consented without hesitation, with the general applause of all the nobility; for Andreas, though a monk, was a man of great family and distinction; the most learned of the court; liberal, rich, affable, and remarkable for facetious conversation; he was, besides, a good soldier, of tried skill and valour, and, in strength and activity, surpassed by no man in the army.

MAFFUDI was not backward to present himself; nor was the combat longer than might be expected from two such willing champions. Gabriel Andreas, seeing his opportunity, with a two-handed sword struck Maffudi between the lower part of the neck and the shoulder, so violently, that he nearly divided his body into two, and felled him dead to the ground. He then cut his head off, and threw it at the king's feet, saying, "There is the Goliath of the Infidels."

THIS expression became instantly the word of battle, or signal to charge. The king, at the head of his troops, rushed

upon the Moorish army, and, throwing them into disorder, drove them back upon Bétwudet, who, with his fresh troops, forced them again back to the king. Seeing no hopes of relief, they dispersed to the mountains, and were slaughtered, and hunted like wild beasts by the peasants, or driven to perish with thirst and hunger. About 12,000 of the Mahometan army are said to have been slain upon the field; with no very considerable loss on the side of the conquerors. The green standard of Mahomet was taken, as also the black velvet tent embroidered with gold; which last, we shall see, the king gave to the Portuguese ambassador some time afterwards, to consecrate and say mass in. A vast number of cattle was taken, and with them much rich merchandise of the Indies. Nor did the king content himself with what he had got in battle. He advanced and encamped at a place where was held the first market of Adel*. The next day he proceeded to a town where was a house of the king, and, going up to the door, and finding it locked, he struck the door with his lance, and nobody answering, he prohibited the soldiers from plundering it, and retired with his army home, leaving his lance sticking in the door as a sign of his having been there, and having had it in his power.

Though the king was received on his return amidst the greatest acclamations of his subjects, as the saviour of his country, the eyes of the whole nation and army were first fixed on Andreas, whose bravery had at last delivered them from that constant and inveterate scourge, Maffudi. Every body pressed forward to throw flowers and green branches in his way; the women celebrating him with songs, putting garlands on his head, and holding out the young children to see him as he passed. The battle was fought in the month

* Vide Map of Shoa.

month of July 1516; and, the same day, the island of Zeyla, in the mouth of the Red Sea, was taken, and its town burned by the Portuguese armament, under Lopez Suarez Alberguiera.

NEITHER the suspicions transmitted from India, nor the mean person of Matthew the ambassador, seem to have made any impression upon the king of Portugal. He received him with every sort of honour, and testified the most profound respect for his master, and attention to the errand he came upon. Matthew was lodged and maintained with the utmost splendour; and, considering the great use of so powerful a friend on the African coast of the Red Sea, where his fleets would meet with all sort of provision and protection, while they pursued the Turkish squadrons, he prepared an embassy on his part, and sent Matthew home on board the fleet commanded by Lopez Suarez for India.

EDWARD GALVAN, a man of capacity and experience, who had filled the offices of secretary of state and ambassador in Spain, France, and Germany, arrived at that time of life when he might reasonably expect to pass the rest of his days in ease, wealth, and honour, found himself unexpectedly chosen, at the age of eighty-six, to go ambassador from his sovereign to Abyssinia. Goetz had much more reason to wonder at the ambassador fixed upon by his master, than at that of Abyssinia sent by the empress Helena to Portugal. The fleet under Suarez entered the Red Sea, and anchored at the flat island of Camaran, close on the coast of Arabia Felix, one of the most unwholesome places he could have chosen. Here Edward Galvan died; and here Suarez, most ignorantly, resolved to pass the winter, which he did, suffering
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ing much for want of every sort of provision but water; whereas twenty-four hours of any wind would have carried him to Masuah, to his journey's end; where, if he had lost the monsoon, he would still have had great abundance of necessaries, and been in the way every moment of promoting the wishes of his master.

LOPEZ DE SEGUEYRA succeeded the ignorant Suarez, who had returned to India. He fitted out a strong fleet at Goa, with which he entered the Red Sea, and sailed for the island of Masuah, where he arrived the 16th of April 1520, having Matthew along with him. Upon the first approach of the fleet, the inhabitants, both of the island and town, abandoned them, and fled to Arkeeko on the main land. Segueyra having remained before Masuah a few days without committing any hostilities, there came at last to him a Christian and a Moor from the continent; who informed him that the main-land, then before him, was part of the kingdom of Abyssinia, governed by an officer called Baharnagash: they added, that the reason of their flying at the sight of the fleet was, that the Turks frequently made descents, and ravaged the island; but that all the inhabitants of the continent were Christians. The Portuguese general was very joyful on this intelligence, and began to treat Matthew more humanely, finding how truly and exactly he had described these places. He gave, both to the Christian and Moor that came off to him, a rich vest; commended them for having fled to Arkeeko rather than expose themselves to an attack from the Turks, but directed them to assure the people on the continent, that they too were all Christians, and under the command of the king of Abyssinia; being arrived there.

there purposely for his service, so that they might return, whenever they should please, in perfect safety.

THE next day, came down to the shore the governor of Arkeeko, accompanied with thirty horsemen, and above two hundred foot. He was mounted on a fine horse, and dressed in a kind of shirt resembling that of the Moors. The governor brought down four oxen, and received in return certain pieces of silk, with which he was well pleased. A very familiar conversation followed; the governor kindly inviting the Portuguese general ashore, assuring him that the Baharnagash, under whose command he was, had already intelligence of his arrival.

IN answer to his inquiries about the religion of the country, the governor told him, that in a mountain, then in sight, twenty-four miles distant, there was a convent called *the Monastery of Bisan*, (which Matthew had often described in the voyage) whose monks, being informed of his arrival, had deputed seven of their number to wait upon him, whom the Portuguese general went to meet accordingly, and received them in the kindest manner.

THESE monks, as soon as they saw Matthew, broke out into the warmest expressions of friendship and esteem, congratulating him with tears in their eyes upon his long voyage and absence. The Portuguese general then invited the monks on board his vessel, where he regaled them, and gave to each presents that were most suitable to their austere life. On his side, Segueyra chose seven Portuguese, with Peter Gomez Tesslera, auditor of the East Indies, who understood Arabic very well, to return the visit of the monks, and see the monastery

nastery of Bisan. This short journey they very happily performed. Teflera brought back a parchment manuscript, which he received as a present from the monks, to be sent to the king of Portugal.

It was on the 24th of April that the Baharnagash arrived at Arkeeko, having before sent information of his intended visit. The Portuguese general, who never doubted but that he would come to the sea-side, pitched his tents, and spread his carpets and cushions on the ground to receive him. But it was signified to him from the Baharnagash, who was probably afraid of putting himself under the guns of the fleet, that he did not intend to advance so far, and that the governor should meet him half way. This being agreed to on both sides, they sat down on the grass.

THE Baharnagash began the conversation, by telling the Portuguese, they had, in virtue of certain prophecies, been long expected in this country; and that he, and all the officers of Abyssinia, were ready to do them every service and kindness. After the Portuguese general had returned a proper answer, the priests and monks concluded the interview with certain religious services. Segueyra then made the Baharnagash a present of a very fine suit of complete armour with some pieces of silk; while the Baharnagash, on his side, made the return with a very fine horse and mule.

ALL doubt concerning Matthew was removed at this interview; he was acknowledged as a genuine ambassador. The Portuguese now flocked to Segueyra, beseeching him to choose from among his men, who should accom-

pany him to the court. The first step was to name Roderigo de'Lima ambassador from the king of Portugal, instead of Galvan, who was dead; and, for his suite, George de Breu, Lopez de Gama, John Scolarc secretary to the ambassador, John Gonfavez his factor and interpreter, Emmanuel de Mare organist, Peter Lopez, Master John his physician, Gaspar Pereira, and Lazarus d'Andrad a painter. The three chaplains were John Fernandes, Peter Alphonso Mendez, and Francisco Alvarez. In this company also went Matthew, the Abyssinian ambassador returned from Portugal, and with him three Portuguese, one called Magailanes, the other Alvaremgo, and the third Diego Fernandes.

It seemed probable, the severe blow which David had given to the king of Adel, by the total destruction of his army on the death of his general Maffudi, would have procured a cessation of hostilities to the Abyssinian frontiers, which they had not experienced during the life of that general; but it appeared afterwards, that, increased in riches and population by the great accession of power which followed the interruption of the Indian trade in Arabia by the Turkish conquest, far from entertaining thoughts of peace, they were rather meditating a more formidable manner of attack, by training themselves to the use of fire-arms and artillery, of which they had provided a quantity, and to which the Abyssinians were as yet strangers.

THE king was encamped in Shoa, covering and keeping in awe his Mahometan provinces, Fatigar and Dawaro; besides which he seemed to have no object but the conquest of the Dobas, that bordered equally upon the Moorish and Christian frontiers, and who (though generally gained by the

the Mahometans) were, when occasion offered, enemies to both. The Shum * of Giannamora, a small district belonging to Abyssinia, full of brave soldiers, and considerably reinforced by David for the very purpose, had the charge of bringing these barbarians to subjection, as being their immediate neighbour.

THE king had afterwards advanced eastward to the frontiers of Fatigar, but was still in the southern part of his dominions. The ambassador and his retinue were landed on the north. They were to cross the whole extent of the empire through woods and over mountains, the like of which are not known in Europe, full of savage beasts, and men more savage than the beasts themselves; intersected by large rivers, and what was the worst circumstance, swelling every day by the tropical rains. Frequently deserts of no considerable length, indeed, intervened, where no sustenance was to be found for man or beast, nor relief for accidental misfortunes. Yet such was the bravery of that small company, that they hesitated not a moment to undertake this enterprise. Every thing was thought easy which contributed to the glory of their king, and the honour of their country.

It was not long before this gallant company found need of all their constancy and courage; for in their short journey to the convent of St Michael (the first they attempted) they found the wood so thick that there was scarcely passage for either man or beast. Briers and thorns, too, of a

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* Or Governor.

variety of species, which they had never before seen, added greatly to the fatigue which the thickness of the woods had occasioned. Mountains presented themselves over mountains, broken into terrible precipices and ravines, by violent torrents and constant storms; their black and bare tops, seemed as it were calcined by the rays of a burning sun, and by incessant lightnings and thunder. Great numbers of wild beasts also presented themselves everywhere in these dark forests, and seemed only to be hindered from devouring them by their wonder at seeing so many men in so lonely a situation. At last the woods began to grow thinner, and some fields appeared where the people were sitting armed, guarding their small flocks of half-starved goats and kine, and crops of millet, of which they saw a considerable quantity sown. The men were black, their hair very gracefully plaited, and were altogether naked, excepting a small piece of leather that covered their middle. At this place they were met by twelve monks, four of whom were distinguished by their advanced years and the respect paid to them by the others.

HAVING rested their mules and camels a short time, they again began their journey by the side of a great lake, near which was a very high mountain, and this they were too weary to attempt to pass. Full of discontent and despondency, they halted at the foot of this mountain, where they passed the night, having received a cow for supper, a present from the convent. Here Matthew (the ambassador) separated his baggage from that of the caravan, and left it to the care of the monks. He had probably made some little money in Portugal; and, distrusting his reception with the king, wisely determined to place it out of danger. The precaution,

caution, however, proved superfluous ; for, a few days after, an epidemical fever began to manifest itself, which, in eight-and-forty hours, carried off Matthew, and soon after Pereira, the servant of Don Roderigo ; so that no opportunity now offered for an explanation with the king about his or the empress's promise of ceding one-third of the kingdom to the Portuguese in case the king would send them succour. Terrified by the fever, and the bad prospect of the weather, they resumed their journey.

THE monastery of Bifan (to which they were now going) is so called from the great quantity of water which is everywhere found about it. The similitude of sound has made Poncet *, and several other travellers, call it the Monastery of the Vision ; but Bifan (water) is its true name, being plentifully supplied with that most valuable element. A number of lakes and rivers are interspersed through its plains ; while abundant springs, that are never dry, flow from the top of each rock, dashing their rills against the rugged projections of the cliffs below.

THE monastery of Bifan, properly so called, is the head of six others in the compass of 26 miles ; each convent placed like a tower on the top of its own rock. That upon which Bifan is situated is very high, and almost perpendicular ; and from this rises another still higher than it, which, unless to its inhabitants, is perfectly inaccessible. It is, on every side, surrounded with wood, interspersed with fruit-trees of many different kinds, as well of those known as of those unknown:

* Vide Poncet's travels, in his return through Tigré, p. 1162. London edit. 12mo. 1709.

unknown in Europe. Oranges, citrons, and limes are in great abundance; wild peaches and small figs of a very indifferent quality; black grapes, on loaded branches, hang down from the barren timber round which they are twined, and afford plentiful supply to man and beast: The fields are covered with myrtles and many species of jessamin; with roses too of various colours; but fragrance is denied to them all, except one sort, which is the white one, single-leaved*.

THE monks of these convents were said once to be about a thousand in number. They have a large territory, and pay a tribute in cows and horses to the Baharnagash, who is their superior. Their horses are esteemed good, as coming from the neighbourhood of the Arabs. However, though I had the absolute choice of them all during the time I commanded the king's guard, I never could draw from that part of the country above a score of sufficient strength and size to bear a man in complete armour.

I SHALL now leave Don Roderigo to pursue his journey towards the king at Shoa. The history of it, and of his embassy, published at large by Alvarez his chaplain, has not met, from the historians of his own country, with a reception which favours the authenticity of its narrative. There are, indeed, in the whole of it, and especially where religion is concerned, many things very difficult of belief, which seem to be the work of the Jesuits some years posterior to the time in which Alvarez was in Abyssinia. Tellez condemns him, though a writer of those times; and Damianus Goetz,

* In Barbary called *Milista*, in Abyssinia, *Kagga*.

Goez, one of the first historians, says, that he had seen a journal written in Alvarez's own name, very different from the journal that is gone forth to the public. For my part, I can only say, that what is related of the first audience with the king, and many of the following pages, seem to me to be fabrications of people that never have been in Abyssinia; and, if this is the case, no imputation can be laid against Francisco Alvarez, as, perhaps, he is not the author of the misrepresentation in question. But, as to the cordiality with which the Catholic religion was received by the monks and people in general, during the long stay and bad reception Don Roderigo met with, I have no sort of doubt that this is a falsehood, and this must be charged directly to his account.

WE have already seen that, early as Zara Jacob's time, the religion of the Franks was held in the utmost detestation, and that in Bæda Mariam's reign the whole country was in rebellion, because the king had directed the Virgin Mary to be painted by one Branca Leon, a Venetian painter, then alive, and in court, when Don Roderigo de Lima was with the king in Shoa. Iscander and Naod were both strict in the tenets of the church of Alexandria; and two Abunas, Imanranha Christos, who lived till Iscander's time, and Abuna Marcus, alive in Alvarez's, had given no allowance for strange or foreign worship to be introduced. How the Catholic could be so favourably and generally received in the time of Alvarez is what I cannot conceive. Blood enough was spilt immediately afterwards, to shew that this affection to the Roman Catholic religion, if any such there was in Alvarez's time, must have been merely transitory. When, therefore, I find any thing in this journal plainly misunder-

stood, I explain and vindicate it ; where I see there is a fact deliberately misrepresented, such as the celebration of the Epiphany, I refute it from ocular demonstration. The rest of the journal I leave *in medio* to the judgment of my reader, who will find it at his bookseller's ; only observing, that there can be no doubt that the journey itself was made by Don Roderigo, and the persons named with him.

I HAVE preserved the several stations of these travellers in my map, though a great part of the countries through which they passed is now in the hands of the Galla, and is as inaccessible to Abyssinians as it is to strangers.

THERE are two particulars in Alvarez's account of this journey which very much surprise me. The first is, the daily and constant danger this company was in from tigers, so daring as to present themselves within pike-length. Of this I have taken notice in the appendix when speaking of the hyæna.

THE other particular relates to the field of beans through which they passed. I never yet saw this sort of grain, or pulse, in Abyssinia. The lupine, a wild plant, somewhat similar, chiefly infects those provinces from which the honey comes, and is regarded there with the utmost aversion. The reason of which will be seen in the sequel. But as these Mahometans, through whose country Don Roderigo passed, are not indigenous, and never had any connection with the ancient state of manners or religion of this country, it is more than probable the cultivation of the bean is no older than the settlement of these Mahometans here, long after
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the Pythagorean prejudices against that plant were forgotten.

It was on the 16th of April 1520 that Don Roderigo de Lima landed in Abyssinia; and it was the 16th of October of the same year when he arrived within sight of the king's camp, distant about three miles. The king had advanced, as hath been said, into Fatigar, about twenty-five miles from the first fair in the kingdom of Adel, and something less than two hundred from the port of Zeyla. The ambassador, after so painful a journey, expected an immediate admission into the king's presence. Instead of which, a great officer, called *the Hadug Ras**, which is chief or commander of the asses, was sent to carry him three miles farther distant, where they ordered him to pitch his tent, and five years passed in the embassy afterwards before he procured his dismissal.

ALVAREZ accounts very lamely for this prodigious interval of time; and, excepting the celebration of the Epiphany, he does not mention one remarkable occurrence in the whole of this period. One would imagine their stay had not been above a month, and that one conversation only passed upon business, which I shall here set down as a specimen of the humour the parties were in the one with the other.

THE king carried the ambassador to see the church Meçana Selaçé, the church of the Trinity, which was then repairing, where many of the kings had been buried while

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* This is a name of humility. He is a great officer, and has no care or charge of asses.

the Royal family resided in Shoa. All the churches in Abyssinia are thatched. Some of Roderigo's own retinue, who bore him ill-will, had put it into the king's head how elegant this church would be if covered with lead, a thing he certainly could have no idea of. He asked Don Rodrigo, whether the king of Portugal could not send him as much sheet-lead as would serve to cover that church? To which the ambassador replied, That the king of Portugal, upon bare mentioning the thing, would send him as much sheet-lead * as would cover not only that church, but all the other churches he should ever build in Abyssinia; and, after all, the present would be but a trifling one.

IMMEDIATELY upon this the king changed his discourse; and observed to the ambassador, in a very serious tone of voice, "That, since they were now upon the subject of presents, he could not help letting the king of Portugal know, that, if ever he sent an ambassador again into that country, he should take care to accompany him with presents of value, for otherwise stranger ambassadors that ventured to come before him without these were very ill received." To which the ambassador returned warmly, "That it was very far from being the custom of the king of Portugal to send presents to any king upon earth; that, having no superior, it was usual for him, only to receive them from others, and to accept them or not, according to his royal pleasure; for it was infinitely below him to consider what was the value of the present itself. He then desired the king of Abyssinia might be informed, that he, Don Rodrigo, came ambassador from the general of the Indies, and not from the king of Portugal; nevertheless, when the king of Portugal had lately dispatched

ed Galvan, who had died upon the road, ambassador to his highness, he had sent with him presents to the value of 100,000 ducats, consulting his own greatness, but not considering himself as under any obligation to send any presents at all; and as to the many scandalous aspersions that had been thrown upon him by mean people, which the king had given credit to, and were made constantly part of his discourse, he wished his highness, from the perusal of the letters which he had brought from the general of the Indies, to learn, that the Portuguese were not accustomed to use lying and dissimulation in their conversations, but to tell the naked truth; to which he the ambassador had strictly confined himself in every circumstance he had related to his highness, if he pleased to believe him; if not, that he was very welcome to do just whatever he thought better in his own eyes. Yet he would, once for all, have his highness to know, that, though he came only as ambassador from the general of the Indies, he could, as such, have presented himself before the greatest sovereign upon earth, without being subjected to hear such conversation as he had been daily exposed to from his highness, which he, as a Portuguese nobleman and a soldier, though he had been no ambassador at all, was not any way disposed to suffer, and therefore he desired his immediate dismissal."

UPON this the king said, "That the distinction he had shewn him was such as he would never have met with from any of his predecessors, having brought no present of any value." To which the ambassador replied in great warmth, "That he had received no distinction in this country whatever, but only injuries and wrongs; that he should think he became a martyr if he died in this country where

he had been robbed of every thing, except the clothes upon his back; that Matthew, who was but a pretended ambassador, had been much otherwise treated by the king of Portugal; but for himself he desired nothing but a speedy dismissal, having delivered his letters and done his errand: Till that time, he should expect to be treated like a man of honour, above lying or falsehood." To this the king answered, "That he believed him to be a man of honour, worth, and veracity, but that Matthew was a liar: at the same time he wished Don Roderigo to know, that he was perfectly informed what degree of respect and good usage Matthew had met with from the king of Portugal's officers and captains, but that he did not impute this to Don Roderigo."

THERE was a rumour at court which very much alarmed the ambassador; it was, that the king intended to detain him according to the invariable custom and practice of his country. Two Venetians, Nicholas Branca Leon and Thomas Gradinego, had been forcibly detained since the reign of Bada Mariam. But what terrified Don Roderigo still more, as a case most similar to his, was the sight of Peter Covillan then in court, who had been sent ambassador by John king of Portugal to Iscander, and ever since was detained without being able to get leave to return, but was obliged to marry and settle in the country.

WHAT was the emperor's real intention is impossible now to know; but, having resolved to send an Abyssinian ambassador to the king of Portugal, it was necessary to dismiss Don Roderigo likewise. However, he did not entirely abandon the whole of his design, but forcibly detained Master John the secretary, and Lazarus d'Andrad the painter, and obliged:

obliged Don Roderigo to depart without them. Zaga Zaab, an Abyssinian monk, who had learned the Portuguese language by waiting on Don Roderigo during his stay in Abyssinia, was chosen for the function; and they set out together for Mafuah, plentifully furnished with every thing necessary for the journey, and arrived safely there without any remarkable occurrence, where they found Don Hector de Silveyra, governor of the Indies, with his fleet, waiting to carry Don Roderigo de Lima home. Whether the king had changed his mind or not is doubtful; but, on the 27th of April 1526, arrived four messengers from court with orders for Don Roderigo to return, and also to bring Don Hector along with him. This was immediately and directly refused; but it was left in the power of Zaga Zaab to return if he pleased, who however declared, that, if he staid behind, he should be thrown to the lions. He, therefore, went on board with great readiness, and they all sailed from Mafuah on the 28th of April of the year first mentioned, in their return to India.

THESE frequent intercourses with the Portuguese had given great alarm to the Mahometan powers, though neither the king of Abyssinia, nor the Portuguese themselves, had reaped any profit from them, or the several fleets that had arrived at Mafuah, which had really no end but to seek the ambassador Don Roderigo. The six years spent in wrangling and childish behaviour, both on the part of the king and the ambassador, had an appearance of something serious between the two powers; and what still alarmed the Moors more was, that no part of the secret had transpired, because no scheme had really been concerted, only mere proposals of vain and idle enterprises, without either power or will.

will to put them in execution. Such were the plans of a joint army, to attack Arabia, and to conquer it down to Jerusalem. The Turks* were on their progress southward in great force; they had conquered Arabia in less than half the time Don Roderigo had spent quarrelling with the king about pepper and mules; and a storm was ready to break in a quarter least expected.

IN the gentle reigns of the Mamalukes, before the conquest of Egypt and Arabia by Selim†, a caravan constantly set out from Abyssinia directly for Jerusalem. They had then a treaty with the Arabs. This caravan rendezvoused at Hamazen, a small territory abounding in provisions, about two days journey from Dobarwa, and nearly the same from Masuah; it amounted sometimes in number to a thousand pilgrims, ecclesiastics as well as laymen. They travelled by very easy journies, not above six miles a-day, halting to perform divine service, and setting up their tents early, and never beginning to travel till towards nine in the morning. They had, hitherto, passed in perfect safety, with drums beating and colours flying, and, in this way, traversed the desert by the road of Suakem.

One year after Selim had taken possession of Cairo, Abba Azerata Christos, a monk famous for holiness, had conducted fifteen hundred of these pilgrims with him to Jerusalem, and they had arrived without accident; but, on their return, they had fallen in with a body of Selim's troops, who slew a great part of them, and forced others to take refuge

* Canse el Gauri, and Torum Bey.

† Selim I. emperor of the Ottomans.

refuge in the desert, where they perished with hunger and thirst. In the year 1525, another caravan assembled at Hamazen, consisting of 336 friars and priests, and fifteen nuns. They set out from Hamazen on the 12th day after leaving this place, travelling slowly; and, being loaded with provisions and water, they were attacked by the Moors of that district, and utterly defeated and robbed. Of the pilgrims taken prisoners, all the old men were put to the sword, and the young were sold for slaves; so that of 336 persons fifteen only escaped, but three of which lived to return to Shoa at the time the ambassador was there. This was the first vengeance the Moors to the northward had yet taken for the alliance made with the Portuguese; and, from this time, the communication with Cairo through the desert ceased as to the Christians, and was carried on by Mahometans only.

SINCE the time of Peter Covillan's arrival in Abyssinia, the views of all parties had very much changed. The Portuguese at first coveted the friendship of Abyssinia, for the sake of obtaining through it a communication with India. But they now became indifferent about that intercourse, since they had settled in India itself, and found the convenience of the passage of the Cape of Good Hope. David, freed from his fears of the Moors of Adel, whom he had defeated, and seeing the great power of the Turks, so much apprehended after the conquest of Egypt, disappointed in India in all their attempts against the Portuguese settlements there; being, moreover, displeased with the abrupt behaviour of the ambassador Don Roderigo, and the promises the empress Helena had made by Matthew without his knowledge, he wished no further connection with the Portuguese,

guefe, for whose affiftance, he thought, he fhould have no ufe.

SELIM, whose firft object was the conquest of India, had met there fo rude a reception that he began to defpair of further fuccefs in his undertaking; but, having conquered Arabia on one fide of the Red Sea, he was defirous of extending his dominions to the other alfo, and for three reafons: The firft was, that the fafety of the holy place of Mecca would be much endangered fhould a Portuguefe army and fleet rendezvous in Abyffinia, and be joined by an army there. The fecond, that his fhips and gallies could not be in fecurity at the bottom of the Gulf, fhould the Portuguefe obtain leave to fortify any ifland or harbour belonging to the Abyffinians. The third, that the king of Abyffinia being, as he was taught to believe, the prince whom the prophet Mahomet had honoured with his correffpondence, he thought it a duty incumbent upon him to convert this prince and kingdom to the Mahometan religion by the fword, a method allowable in no religion but that of Mahomet and of Rome.

THE ancient and feeble arms of lances and bows, carried by half-naked peafants affembled in hafte and at random for an occafion, were now laid afide. In place of thefe, Selim had left garrifons of veteran troops in all the fea-coaft towns of Arabia, exercifed in fire-arms, and furnifhed with large trains of artillery, fupported by a large fleet which, though deftined againft the Portuguefe in India, and constantly beat by them, never failed, both going and coming, to reinforce their pofts in Arabia with ftores and frefh foldiers.

THE empress Helena died in 1525, the year before the Portuguese embassy ended, after having brought about an interview between the two nations, which, by the continual disavowal of Matthew's embassy, it is plain that David knew not how to turn to his advantage. Soon after her death, the king prepared to renew the war with the Moors, without having received the least advantage from the Portuguese. But very differently had the people of Adel employed this interval of peace. They had strengthened themselves by the strictest friendship with the Turkish officers in Arabia, especially with the basha of Zibit, a large trading port nearly opposite to Masuah. A Turkish garrison was put into Zeyla; and a Turk, with a large train of artillery, commanded in it. All was ready against the first invasion the king was to make, and he was now marching directly towards their country.

THE first retaliation, for the Portuguese friendship, (as we have already observed) had been the cutting off the caravan for Jerusalein. In revenge for this, the king had marched into Dawaro, and sent a body of troops from that province to see what was the state of the Moorish forces in Adel. These were no sooner arrived on the frontiers of that kingdom, than they were met by a number of the enemy appointed to guard those confines, and, coming to blows, the Abyssinians defeated, and drove them into the desert parts of their own country. The king still advanced till he met the Mahometan army, and a battle was fought at Shimbra Coré, where the Abyssinian army was totally defeated; the Betwudet, Hadug Ras, the governor of Amhara, Robel, governor of the mountain of Gelhen, with the greatest part of the nobility, and four thousand men, were all slain.

MAHOMET, called Gragné, (which signifies *left-handed*) commanded this army. He was governor of Zeyla, and had promoted the league with the Turkish bashas on the coast of Arabia ; and, having now given the king a check in his first enterprize, he resolved to carry on the war with him in a way that should produce something decisive. He remained then quiet two years at home, sent all the prisoners he had made in the last expedition to Mecca, and to the Turkish powers on the coast, and required from them in return the number of troops stipulated, with a train of portable artillery, which was punctually furnished, while a large body of janizaries crossed over and joined the Moorish army. Mahomet led these troops straight into Fatigar, which he over-ran, as he did the two other neighbouring provinces Ifat and Dawaro, burning and laying waste the whole country, and driving, as was his usual manner, immense numbers of the inhabitants, whom the sword had spared, back with him to Adel.

THE next year, Mahomet marched from Adel directly into Dawaro, committing the same excesses. The king, who saw in despair that total ruin threatened his whole country, and that there were no hopes but in a battle, met the Moorish army at Ifras, very much inferior to them in every sort of appointment. The battle was fought 1st May 1528 ; the king was defeated, and Ilam Segued, his first minister, who commanded the army that day, with many of his principal officers, were slain upon the spot, and the Moorish army took possession of Shoa. David retreated with his broken army into Amhara, and encamped at Hegu, thinking to procure reinforcements during the bad weather, but Gragné was too near to give him time for this. He entered Amhara, destroying

destroying all before him. The second of November he burnt the church of Mecana Selassé of the holy sepulchre, and Atronfa Mariam; and, on the 8th of the same month, Ganeta Georgis; on the 2d of December, Debra Agezia-beher; the 6th of the same month, St Stephen's church; after which he returned to Adel with his booty.

THE following year Gragné returned in April, plundered and burnt Warwar, and wintered there. In the year 1530 Gragné invaded the province of Tigré in the month of October, while the king, who had wintered in Dembea, marched up to Woggora; thence, in December, he went to Tsalamet, and returned to Tigré to keep the feast of the Epiphany.

THE king, next year, marched through Tzegadé, and Gragné close followed him, as if he had been hunting a wild beast rather than making war. The 2d of January he burnt Abba Samuel, then went down into Mazaga the borders of Sennaar to a conference with Muchtar, one of his confederates, when it was resolved that they should fight the king wherever they could meet him, and attach themselves to his person alone. Gragné by forced marches overtook the king upon the Nile at Delakus, the 6th of February, and offered him battle, knowing the proud spirit of David, that he would not refuse, however great the disproportion was.

THE event was such as might be expected. Fortune again declared against the king. Negadé Yafous, Acab Saat, and many others of the nobility perished, fighting to the last, in the fight of their sovereign. In this bat-

tle the brave monk, Andreas *, much advanced in years, was slain, behaving with the greatest gallantry, unwilling to survive the ruin of his country.

THE Moors now found it unnecessary to keep together an army. They divided into small parties, that they might more effectually and speedily ruin the country. Part of Gragné's army was detached to burn Axum; the other under Simeon continued in Amhara to watch the king's motions; and, while he attempted to relieve Axum, dispersed his army, on which the town was burnt, and with it many of the richest churches in Abyssinia, Hallelujah, Banquol, Gaso, Debra Kerbé, and many others. And, on the 7th of April, Saul, son of Tesfo Yafous, fought another detachment of the Moorish army, and was cut to pieces.

THE 28th year of his reign, 1536, the king crossed the Tacazzé, and had many disastrous encounters with the people of Siré and Serawé. Tesfo l'Oul, who commanded in this latter province for the king, surprised a Turkish party under Adli, whom he slew, and met with the same fate himself from Abbas, Moorish governor of Serawé, when a great many of the principal people of that province were there slain. Calila, a large island in the lake Tzana, was plundered, and the convent upon it burnt. It was one of the principal places where the Abyssinians hid their treasure, and a great booty was found there.

In the following year, Gragné, in a message represented to him, that he might see he was fighting against God, exhorting.

It was he who, as we have seen, slew the Moor Massudi in single combat in the beginning

horting him to be wise, and make his peace in time, which he should have upon the condition of giving him his daughter in marriage, and he would then withdraw his army, otherwise he would never leave Abyssinia till he had reduced it to a condition of producing nothing but grass. But the king, nothing daunted, returned him for answer, That he was an infidel, and a blasphemer, used as an instrument to chastise him and his people for their many sins ; that it was his duty to bear the correction patiently ; but that it would soon happen, when this just purpose was answered, that he would be destroyed, and all those with him, as such wicked instruments had always been ; that he the king, and Abyssinia his kingdom, would be preserved as a monument of the mercy of God, who never entirely forsook his people ; though he might chastise them.

INDEED, the condition of the country was now such that a total destruction seemed to be at hand ; for a famine and plague, its constant companion, raged in Abyssinia, carrying off those that the sword had spared.

GIDEON and Judith, king and queen of the Jews, in the high country of Samen, after having suffered much from Gragné, had at last rebelled and joined him ; and the king, who it seems continued to shew an inclination to the Catholic church, which he had imbibed during the embassy of Don Roderigo, by this had occasioned many to fall off from him, he and the court observing Easter according to the Roman kalendar, while the rest of the clergy and kingdom continued firm to that of Alexandria.

AT this time Ofman of Dawaro, Jonadab, Kefla, Yousef, and other rebel Abyſſinians, part of Ammer's army, one of Gragné's generals, ſurprized the king's eldeſt ſon, Victor, going to join his father the 7th day of March ; flew him, and diſperſed his army. Three days after, the king himſelf came to action, with Ammer at Zaat in Waag, but he was there again beaten, and his youngeſt ſon Menas was taken priſoner. The king had ſcarce now an attendant, and, being almoſt alone, he took refuge among the rocks and buſhes in a high mountain called *Tſalem*, in the diſtrict of Tſalamet. But he had not remained above a day there, when he was followed by Joram, (rebel-maſter of that diſtrict) and narrowly eſcaped being taken as he was croſſing the Tacazzé on foot and alone ; whence he took refuge on mount Tabor, a very high mountain in Siré, and there he paſſed the winter.

THE amazing ſpirit and conſtancy of the king, who alone ſeemed not to forſake the cauſe of his kingdom, who now, without children or army, ſtill ſingly, made war for the liberty of his country, aſtoniſhed all Abyſſinia as well friends as enemies. Every veteran ſoldier, therefore, that could eſcape the ſmall parties of the Moors which ſurrounded the king, joined him at Tabor, and he was again at the head of a very ſmall, but brave body of troops, though it was ſcarcely known in what part of the kingdom he was hid. When Achmet-eddin, lieutenant of Ammer, paſſed through Siré, loaded with the ſpoils of the churches and towns he had plundered, the king, finding him within his reach, deſcended from the mountain, and, by a ſudden march, ſurprized and flew him with his own hand, leaving the greateſt part of his army dead on the field. After which he diſtributed the booty among his ſmall army.

AMMER,

AMMER, the king's mortal enemy, who had taken upon himself the destruction of the royal family, descended into the province of Siré, and neighbourhood of Tabor, and there indulged himself in the most wanton cruelties, torturing and murdering the priests, burning churches and villages, hoping by this the king would lose his temper, and leave his strong-hold in the mountain. But hearing at the same time, that a large quantity of plate, and other treasure, belonging to the church Debra Kerbé, had been carried into an island in the lake Tzala for safety, he left the king, and seized his booty in the lake to a very great amount.

HOWEVER, he there fell ill of a fever; but, on his return, was so far advanced in his recovery as to resume his schemes of destroying the king; when, the night of the 10th of February 1538, while he was sleeping in bed in his tent, a common foldier, from what quarrel or cause is not known, went secretly and stabbed him several times in the belly with a two-edged knife, so that he died instantly, to David's great relief, and much to the safety of the whole kingdom.

It was now 12 years since Don Roderigo de Lima had sailed from Masuah, carrying with him Zaga Zaab ambassador from the king of Abyssinia. This embassy arrived safe in Lisbon, and was received with great magnificence by king John; but, as the circumstances of the kingdom when he left Masuah were really flourishing, and as the treatment he met in Portugal was better than he had, probably, ever experienced at home, he seems to have been in no haste to put an end to this embassy. On the other side, the king of Portugal's affairs in India were arrived at that

degree of prosperity and power, that little use remained for such an ally as the king of Abyssinia.

THE Moorish trade and navigation to India had already received a fatal blow, as well from the Portuguese themselves, as from the fall of the Mamalukes in Egypt; and Soliman, and his servant Sinan Basha, by their conquest, and introducing foldiers who had not any idea or talent for trade, but only plunder and rapine, had given a finishing stroke to what the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope began. The filling Arabia with fire-arms and Turks was now of consequence to none but to David; and of such a consequence it had been, that, as we have seen, in the course of 12 years it had left him nothing in Abyssinia but the bare name of king, and a life so precarious that it could not be counted upon from one day's end to the other.

DAVID had detained in Abyssinia two Portuguese, one called Master John, the other Lazarus d'Andrad a painter, being two of Don Roderigo's train that came from the Indies with him. The Abuna (Mark) was become old and incapable, and, since the Turkish conquest of Egypt, very indifferent to, and unconnected with, what passed at Cairo. Before he died, at the king's desire he had appointed John his successor, and accordingly ordained him Abuna, as well as having first given him all the inferior orders at once; for John was a layman and student in physic; a very simple creature, but a great bigot; and we shall from henceforward call him John Bermudes.

JOHN very willingly consented to his ordination, provided the pope approved of it; and he set out for Rome,
not

not by the usual way of India, but through Arabia and Egypt; and, arriving there without accident, was confirmed by Paul III. the then pope, not only as patriarch of Abyssinia, but of Alexandria likewise; to which he added, as Bermudes says, the most unintelligible and incomprehensible title of Patriarch of the Sea. Bermudes, to this variety of charges, had this other added to him, of ambassador from King David to the court of Portugal; and for this he was certainly very fit, however he might be for his ecclesiastical dignities; for he had been now 12 years in Abyssinia, knew the country well, and had been witness of the variety of distresses which, following close one upon another, had brought this country to its then state of ruin.

WHILE these things passed in the north of Abyssinia, a terrible catastrophe happened in the south. A Mahometan chief, called Vizir Mudgid, governor of Arar, having an opportunity from his situation to hear of the riches which were daily carried from churches, and other places, for safety into the mountain of Geshen, took a resolution to attempt that natural fortress, though in itself almost impregnable, and strengthened by an army constantly encamped at the foot of it.

WHEN Mudgid arrived near the mountain he found it was forsaken by the troops destined to guard it; and led by a Mahometan, who was a mercurial servant to the princes above, he ascended with his troops without opposition, putting all the royal family that were prisoners, and indeed every individual of either sex resident there, indiscriminately to the sword.

THE measure of David's misfortunes seems to have been now full, and he died accordingly this very year 1540.

It will be necessary here to remind the reader, that Alvarez, the chaplain and historian of the first Portuguese embassy, was (as he said) on his return appointed by king David to make his submission to the pope. Leaving Zaga Zaab, therefore, in Portugal, he proceeded to Bologna, where the emperor Charles V. was then in person, before whom and the pope himself he delivered his credentials framed by Peter Covillan, and afterwards, in a long speech, the reasons of his embassy.

THE pope received this submission of David with infinite pleasure, at a time when so many kingdoms in the west were revolting from his supremacy. He considered it as a thing of the greatest moment to be courted before the emperor by so powerful a prince in Africa. But as for the emperor himself, though he was then preparing for an expedition against the Mahometans, and though it was his favourite war, he seems to have been perfectly indifferent either to the embassy itself, or to the person that sent it; a great proof that he believed there was nothing real in it.

MANY other people have doubted whether this embassy, or that of John Bermudes, actually came from the Abyssinian court, as the king would scarcely have abandoned the form of the Alexandrian church in which he had been brought up by Abuna Mark, then alive. Abuna Mark, moreover, could scarcely be believed to have promoted embassies which were intended to strike at the root of his own religion.

religion, and the patriarchal power with which he was endowed.

BUT to this it is easily answered, That the Abyssinian historian of David's reign, through the whole course of it, readily admits his constant attachment to the see of Rome. He gives a striking example of it during the war with Gragné, when the king celebrated Easter after the manner of the Roman Catholics, though it was to have this certain effect of dividing his kingdom, and alienating the minds of his subjects, of whose assistance he was then in the utmost need. And as for the Abuna, we are to consider that Cairo had been taken, and the government, which Abuna Mark owned for the lawful one, had been overturned by the Turks who then possessed it, and were actually persecuting the Alexandrian church.

THE Abuna, then, and the king also, had the same reason for not applying to Cairo, the seat of the Turks their enemies; and, therefore, they more readily accommodated matters with a people from whom only their assistance could come; and without whom, it was probable, that both the Christian religion and civil government of Abyssinia would fall together.

It has been said of this king by the European writers who have touched upon the history of his reign, that he was a prince who had began it in the most promising manner, but after the death of the empress Helena, he had abandoned himself to all sort of debauchery, and especially that of women; inasmuch, as Mr Ludolf says, he suffered his concubines to have idols in his palace. This I take

to be a calumny copied from the Portuguese priests, who never forgave him the denial of his writing the letters by Matthew, in which it was said he gave the Portuguese, or rather king of Portugal, one-third of the kingdom; for he succeeded to the crown at 11 years of age, defeated and flew Maffudi when he was about sixteen; and, when Don Roderigo and the Portuguese embassy were with him, he was then something more than twenty, a very devout, prudent prince, according to the account Alvarez, an eye-witness, gives of him; and all this time empress Helena was alive.

AGAIN, the very year after the Portuguese embassy left Abyssinia, that is, in the year 1526, the king was defeated by the Moors, and, from that time to his death, was hunted about the country like a wild beast, from rock to rock, very often alone, and at all times slenderly attended, till he died, in 1540, at the age of 46; so there is no period during his life in which this calumny can be justly fixed upon him.

As for the idolatry he is accused of suffering in his palace among his Pagan mistresses, I cannot recollect any place in the adjoining nations from which he could have brought these idolatrous rites or mistresses. The Pagan countries around him profess a remnant of ill-understood Sabæism, worshipping the stars, the moon, and the wind; but I do not, as I say, recollect any of these bordering on Abyssinia who worship idols.

CLAUDIUS, OR ATZENAF SEGUED.

FROM 1540 TO 1559.

Prosperous Beginning of Claudius's Reign—Christopher de Gama lands in Abyssinia—Prevented by the rainy Season from joining the King—Battle of Ainal—Battle of Offalo—Christopher de Gama slain—Battle of Isaac's Bet—Moors defeated, and their General slain—Abyssinian Army defeated—Claudius slain—Remarkable Behaviour of Nur, Governor of Zeyla, General of the Moors.

CLAUDIUS succeeded his father David III. being yet young, and found the empire in circumstances that would have required an old and experienced prince. But, though young, he possessed those graceful and affable manners which, at first sight, attached people of all sorts to him: He had been tutored with great care by the empress Helena, was expert in all warlike exercises, and brave beyond his years.—So say the Abyssinian annals; and though I have not thought myself warranted to depart from the letter of the context, yet it is my duty to the reader to shew him how this could not be.

CLAUDIUS was born about the 1522; the empress Helena died in 1525. From this it is plain, the first three years of his

his life was all that he could be under the tutelage of the empress Helena ; and, at so early a period, it is not possible he could receive much advantage. The princess, to whom he was indebted for his education, was Sabel Wenghel, celebrated in the Abyssinian history for wisdom and courage equal to the empress Helena herself. She was relict of David. We shall hereafter see her called Helena likewise upon another occasion ; but the reader is desired to have in mind, that this confusion of persons is owing only to that of names to be met with almost in every reign in the Abyssinian history.

CLAUDIUS is said likewise in these annals to have been a child at the time of his accession ; but, having been born in the 1522, and succeeding to the throne in 1540, he must have been eighteen years of age ; and this cannot be called childhood, especially in Abyssinia, unless, as I have before said, this observation of age was relative to the arduous task he had in hand, by succeeding to a kingdom arrived at the very eve of perdition.

THE MOORS, notwithstanding the constant success they had against David, still feared the consequences of his long experience and undaunted resolution in the most adverse fortune. They were happy, therefore, in the change of such an enemy, however unfortunate, for a young man scarcely yet out of the influence of female government, which had always been favourable to them, and their religion.

A GENERAL league was formed without delay among all the Mahometan chiefs to surround Claudius, and fall upon him

him before he was in a situation to defend himself, and by one stroke to put an end to the war. They accordingly set about collecting troops from all quarters, but with a degree of inattention and presumption that sufficiently shewed they thought themselves in no danger. But the young king having good intelligence that vizir Afa, Ofman, Debra Yafous, and Joram, (who had so nearly taken his father prisoner in the mountain Tfalem) had their quarters near him, and neglected a good look-out, fell upon them, without their knowing what his force was, entirely defeated them, dispersed their army, and struck a panic into the whole confederacy by the manner this victory was followed up; the king himself on horseback continued the pursuit all that day and night, as also the next day, and did not return to his camp till the second evening after his victory, having slain without mercy every one that had fallen into his hands, either in the flight, or in the field of battle.

CLAUDIUS's behaviour, on this first occasion, raised the soldiers confidence to a degree of enthusiasm. Every man that had served under his father repaired to him with the greatest alacrity. Above all, the Agows of Lafla came down to him in great troops from their rugged and inaccessible mountains, the chief of that warlike nation being related to him by his mother.

THE king in person at the head of his army became now an object of such consideration as to make the Mahometan chiefs no longer retire as usual to winter in Adel, but canton themselves in the several districts they had conquered in Abyssinia, and lay aside the thoughts of farther wasting the country,

country, to defend themselves against so active and spirited an assailant. They agreed then to join their whole forces together, and march to force the king to a battle. Osman of Ganzé, vizir Mudgid who had settled in Amhara, Saber-eddin *, and all the lesser rebel officers of Siré and Serawé, effected a junction about the same time without opposition. Jonathan alone, a rebel of great experience, had not yet appeared with his troops. The king, on the other hand, did not seem over anxious to come to an engagement, though his army was every day ready for battle; and his ground was always taken with advantage, so that it was almost desperate to pretend to force him.

JONATHAN at last was on his way to join the confederates; but the king had as early intelligence of his motions as his friends: and, while he was yet two days march distant from the camp, the king, leaving his tents standing and his fires lighted, by a forced march in the night came upon him, (while he thought him blocked up by his rebel associates at a distance) and, finding Jonathan without preparation or defence, cut his whole army to pieces, slew him, and then returned to his own tents as rapidly as he went, having ordered small detachments to continue in the way between him and his camp, patrolling lest some ambush should be laid for him by the enemy, who, if they had been informed of his march, though they were too late to prevent the success of it, might still have attempted to revenge it.

BUT

* Constant in the faith.

But intelligence was now given to the Moors with much less punctuality and alacrity than formerly. So generally did the king possess the affections of the country-people, that no information came to the confederate army till the next day after his return, when, early in the morning, he dispatched one of the Moorish prisoners that he had taken three days before, and spared for the purpose, carrying with him the head of Jonathan, and a full account of the havock to which he had been a witness.

This messenger bore also the king's defiance to the Moors, whom he challenged, under the odious epithets they deserved, to meet him; and then actually to shew he was in earnest, marched towards them with his army, which he formed in order of battle. But tho' they stood under arms for a considerable time, whilst several invitations to single combat were sent from the Christian horsemen, as their custom is, before they engage, or when their camps are near each other, yet the Moors were so astonished at what had happened, and what they saw now before them, that not one officer would advise the risking a battle, nor any one soldier accept of the challenge offered. The king then returned to his camp, distributed the whole booty among his soldiers, and refreshed them, preserving a proper station to cover the wounded, whom he sent off to places of security.

The king was in the country of Samen in the neighbourhood of Lasta. He then decamped and passed the river Tazzé, that he might be nearer those districts of which the Turks had possessed themselves. In this march all sorts of people joined the victorious army. Those that had revolted, and many that had apostatized, came without fear and sur-

rendered themselves, trusting to the clemency of the prince. Many of the Moors, natives of Abyssinia, did the same, after having experienced the difference between the mild Christian government, and that of their new masters, the Moors and Turks of Adel.

THE king encamped at Sard, there to pass his Easter; and, as is usual in the great festivals, many of the nobility obtained leave to attend the religious offices of the season at home with their families. Ammer, governor of Ganzé, who knew the custom of the country, thought this was the time to surprise the king thinly attended; and it might have succeeded, if intelligence of the enemy's designs had not been received almost as soon as they were formed. Claudius, therefore, drawing together some of the best of his forces, placed himself in ambush in Ammers's way, who, not suspecting, fell into it with his army, which was totally destroyed on the 24th of April 1541. After which the king left his own quarter at Sard and came to Shume.

WHILE things were taking this favourable turn in Abyssinia, the ambassador, John Bermudes, had passed from Rome to Lisbon, where he was acknowledged by the king as patriarch of Alexandria, Abyssinia, and, as he will have it, of the Sea. The first thing he did was to give the Portuguese a sample of Abyssinian discipline, by putting Zaga Zaab in irons for having wasted so much time without effecting any of the purposes of his embassy; but, by the interposition of the king, he was set at liberty in a few days. Bermudes then fell roundly to the subject of his embassy, and drew such a picture of the distresses of Abyssinia, and insisted in his own blunt way so violently with the king of

Portugal, and the nobility in general, that he procured an order from the king for Don Garcia de Noronha, who was then going out viceroy of the Indies, to send 400 Portuguese musqueteers from India to the relief of Abyffinia, and to land them at Masuah.

JOHN BERMUDEZ, to secure the assistance promised, resolved to embark in the same fleet with Don Garcia; but he fell sick, from poison given him, as he apprehends, by Zaga Zaab, and this delayed his embarkation a year. The next year, being recovered of his illness, he arrived safely at India. In the interim Don Garcia died, and Don Stephen de Gama, who succeeded him, did not embrace the scheme of the intended succour with such eagerness as Bermudez could have wished.

AFTER some delay, however, it was resolved that Don Stephen should himself undertake an expedition from India, to burn the Turkish gallies that were at Suez. In this, however, Don Stephen was disappointed. Upon intelligence of the intended visit, the Turkish gallies had been all drawn ashore. He came after this to the port of Masuah, where the fleet intended to water; and, for that purpose, their boats were sent to Arkeeko, a small town and fortress upon the main-land, where good water may be found. But the Moors and Turks from Zeyla and Adel were now masters there, who took the 1000 webs of cotton-cloth the captain had sent to exchange for water and provisions, and sent him word back, that his master, the king of Adel, was now king of all Ethiopia, and would not suffer any further trade to be carried on, but through his subjects; if, therefore, the captain of the fleet would make peace with him, he should restore the cotton-

webs which had been taken, supply him plentifully with provisions, and make amends for the sixty Portuguese slain on the coast near Zeyla: For, upon the fleet's entering the Red Sea, this number of Portuguese had run away with a boat; and, landing in the kingdom of Adel, where they could procure no water, they were decoyed to give up their arms, and were then all massacred.

THE captain, Don Stephen, saw the trap laid for him by the Moors, and, resolving to pay them in their own coin, he returned this answer to their message, "That he was very willing to trade with the Moorish officer, but did not demand restitution of the clothes, as they were taken in fair war. As for the sixty Portuguese, they had met the death they deserved, as being traitors and deserters: That he now sent a thousand more clothes, desiring water and provisions, especially live cattle; and that, as it was now the time of their festival, he would treat with them for peace, and bring his goods ashore, as soon as the holidays were over."

THIS being agreed to on both sides, with equal bad faith and intention towards each other, and Don Stephen having obtained his refreshments, he strictly forbade any further communication with the shore. He then selected a body of six hundred men, the command of whom he gave to Martin Correa, who, in light boats, without shewing any fire, landed undiscovered below Arkeeko, and took possession of the entrances to the town, putting all that they met to the sword. Nur, governor of the province for the king of Adel, fled as soon as he had heard the Portuguese were in the town: He was already in the fields, when Martin Correa shot him with a musquet, and cut off his head,
which

which was sent before them to the queen, Sabel Wenghel, then in a strong-hold of the province of Tigré, and with her Degdeasmati (which, in common discourse, is called *Kasmati*) Robel. This was the person of that name who had met Don Roderigo in his journey to find the king, and who was now governor of the province. The queen received the Moorish general's head with great demonstrations of joy, considering it as an early pledge of future victories.

IN the mean time, Don Stephen de Gama, captain of the fleet, began to enrol the men destined to march to join Claudius. Four hundred and fifty musqueteers was the number granted by the king to Bermudes; but an ardent desire of glory had seized all the Portuguese, and every one strove to be in the nomination for that enterprise. All that Don Stephen could do was to choose men of the first rank for the officers; and these, of necessity, having many servants whom they carried with them, greatly, by this means, encreased the number beyond the 450. Don Christopher de Gama, Don Stephen's youngest brother, a nobleman of great hopes, was chosen to command this small army of heroes.

A VERY great murmuring, nevertheless, prevailed among those that were refused, which was scarcely kept in due bounds by the presence and authority of the governor Don Stephen himself. And from this honourable emulation, and the discontent these brave soldiers who were left behind shewed, the bay where the galley rode in the harbour of Masuah, on board which this council was held, is called to this day *Bahia dos Agravados*, the Bay of Wronged, or Injured People, sometimes misinterpreted the Bay of the Sick.

THE army under Don Christopher marched to Arkeeko, where the next day came the governor Don Stephen, and the principal officers of the fleet, and took leave of their countrymen ; and, after receiving the blessing of Don John Bermudes, *Patriarch of the Sea*, the governor and rest of the Portuguese embarked, and returned to India.

DON CHRISTOPHER, with the greatest intrepidity, began his march towards Dobarwa, the easiest entrance into Abyssinia, though still over rugged and almost inaccessible mountains. The Baharnagash had orders to attend him, and furnish this little army with cattle both for their provision and carriages ; and this he actually performed. But the carriages of the small train of artillery giving way in this bad road, and there being nobody at hand to assist them with fresh ones in case the old failed, Gama made certain carriages of wood after the pattern of those they had brought from Portugal ; and, as iron was a very scarce commodity in Abyssinia, he made them split in pieces some barrels of old and useless firelocks for the wheels with which they were to draw their artillery.

THE queen, without delay, came forward to join Don Christopher ; who, hearing she was at hand, went to meet her a league from the city with drums beating and colours flying, and saluted her with a general discharge of fire-arms, which terrified her much. Her two sisters accompanied her, and a number of attendants of both sexes. Don Christopher, at the head of his soldiers, paid his compliments with equal gallantry and respect. The queen was covered from head to foot, but lifted up her veil, so that her face could be seen by him ; and he, on the other hand, appointed a hundred musqueteers

musqueteers for her guard; and thus they returned to Dobarwa mutually satisfied with this their first interview.

DON CHRISTOPHER marched from Dobarwa eight days through a very rugged country, endeavouring, if possible, to bring about a junction with the king. And it was in this place, while he was encamped, that he received a message from the Moorish general, full of opprobrious expressions, which was answered in much the same manner. Don Christopher continued his march as much as he could on account of the rains; and Gagnè, whose greatest desire was to prevent the junction, followed him into Tigrè. Neither army desired to avoid the other, and they were both marching to the same point; so that on the 25th of March 1542, they came in sight of each other at Ainal, a small village in the country of the Baharnagash.

THE Moorish army consisted of 1000 horsemen, 5000 foot, 50 Turkish musqueteers, and a few pieces of artillery. Don Christopher, besides his 450 musqueteers, had about 12,000 Abyssinians, mostly foot, with a few bad horse commanded by the Baharnagash, and Robel governor of Tigrè. Don Christopher, whose principal view was a junction with the king, though he did not decline fighting, yet, like a good officer, he chose to do it as much as possible upon his own terms; and, therefore, as the enemy exceeded greatly in the number of horse, he posted himself so as to make the best of his fire-arms and artillery. And well it was that he did so, for the Abyssinians shewed the utmost terror when the firing began on both sides.

GRAGNE, mounted on a bay horse, advancing too near Don Christopher's line that he might see if in any part it was accessible to his cavalry, and being known by his dress to be an officer of distinction, he was shot at by Peter de Sa, a Portuguese marksman, who killed his horse, and wounded the rider in the leg. This occasioned a great confusion, and would probably have ended in a defeat of the Moors, had not the Portuguese general also been wounded immediately after by a shot. Don Christopher, to shew his confidence of victory, ordered his men forthwith to pitch their tents, upon which the Moors retired with Gragnè (whom they had mounted on another horse) without being pursued, the Abyssinians having contented themselves with being spectators of the battle.

DON CHRISTOPHER, with his army and the empress, now entered into winter-quarters at Affalo; nor did Gragnè depart to any distance from him, but took up his quarters at Zabul, in hopes always to fight the Portuguese before it was possible for them to effect a junction with the king. The winter passed in a mutual intercourse of correspondence and confidence between the king and Don Christopher, and in determining upon the best scheme to pursue the war with success. Don Christopher and the queen were both of opinion, that, considering the small number of Portuguese first landed, and their diminution by fighting, and a strange climate, it was risking every thing to defer a junction till the winter was over.

THE Moorish general was perfectly of the same opinion; therefore, as soon as the king began his march from Dembea, Gragnè advanced to Don Christopher's camp, and placed him-

self between the Portuguese army and that of the king, drawing up his troops before the camp, and defying the Portuguese to march out, and fight, in the most opprobrious language. Don Christopher, in a long catalogue of virtues which he possessed to a very eminent degree, had not the smallest claim to that of patience, so very necessary to those that command armies. He was brave to a fault; rash and vehement; jealous of what he thought military honour; and obstinate in his resolutions, which he formed in consequence. The defiance of this barbarian, at which an old general would have laughed, made him utterly forget the reasons he himself frequently alledged, and the arguments used by the queen, which the king's approach daily strengthened, that it was risking every thing to come to a battle till the two armies had joined. He had, however, from no other motive but Gragnè's insolence, formed his resolution to fight, without waiting a junction; and accordingly the 30th of August, early in the morning, having chosen his ground to the best advantage, he offered battle to the Moorish army.

GRAGNE, by presents sent to the basha of Zibid, had doubled his number of horse, which now consisted of 2000. He had got likewise 100 Turkish musqueteers, an infinite number of foot, and a train of artillery more numerous and complete than ever had been seen before in Abyssinia. The queen, frightened at the preparation for the battle, fled, taking with her the Portuguese patriarch, who seemed to have as little inclination as she had to see the issue of the day. But Don Christopher, who knew well the bad effects this example would have, both on Abyssinians and Portuguese, sent twenty horse, and brought them both back; telling the patriarch it was a breach of duty he would not suf-

fer, for him to withdraw until he had confessed him, and given the army absolution before the action with the Infidels.

THE battle was fought on the 30th of August with great fury and obstinacy on both sides. The Portuguese had strewed, early in the morning, all the front of their line with gun-powder, to which, on the approach of the Turks, they set fire by trains, which burnt and disabled a great many of them; and things bore a prosperous appearance, till the Moorish general ordered some artillery to be pointed against the Abyssinians, who, upon hearing the first explosion, and seeing the effect of some balls that had lighted among them, fled, and left the Portuguese to the number only of 400, who were immediately surrounded by the Moorish army. Nor did Gagnè pursue the fugitives, his affair being with the Portuguese, the smallness of whose number promised they would fall an easy and certain sacrifice. He therefore, attacked their camp upon every side with very little success, having lost most of his best officers, till, unfortunately, Don Christopher, fighting and exposing himself everywhere, was singled out by a Turkish soldier, and shot through the arm. Upon this all his men turned their thoughts from their own preservation to that of their general, who obstinately refused to fly, till he was by force put upon a litter, and sent off, together with the patriarch and queen.

NIGHT now coming on, Don Christopher had got into a wood in which there was a cave. There he ordered himself to be set down to have his wounds dressed; which, being done, he was urged by the queen and patriarch to continue
his

his flight. But he had formed his resolution, and, without deigning to give his reasons, he obstinately refused to retreat a step farther. In vain the queen, and those that knew the country, told him he was just in the tract of the Moorish horsemen, who would not fail soon to surround him. He repeated his resolution of staying there with such a degree of firmness, that the queen and patriarch, who had no great desire for martyrdom, left him to his fate, which presently overtook him.

IN one of Don Christopher's expeditions to the mountains, he had taken a very beautiful woman, wife to a Turkish officer, whom he had slain. This lady had made a shew of conversion to Christianity; lived with him afterwards, and was treated by him with the utmost tenderness. It was said, that, after he was wounded and began to fly, this woman had given him his route, and promised to overtake him with friends that would carry him to a place of safety. Accordingly, some servants left by the queen, hidden among the rocks, to watch what might befall him, and assist him if possible, saw a woman, in the dawn of the morning, come to the cave, and return into the wood immediately, whence there rushed out a body of Moorish horse, who went straight to the cave and found Don Christopher lying upon the ground forely wounded. Upon the first question that was asked him, he declared his name, which so overjoyed the Moors, that they gave over further pursuit, and returned with the prisoner they had taken. Don Christopher was brought into the presence of the Moorish general, Cragné, who loaded him with reproaches; to which he replied with such a share of invectives, that the Moor, in the violence of his passion, drew his sword and cut

off his head with his own hand. His head was sent to Constantinople, and parts of his body to Zibid and other quarters of Arabia.

THE Portuguese camp was now taken, and all the wounded found in it were put to death. The women, from their fear, having retired all into Don Christopher's tent, the Turks began to indulge themselves in their usual excesses towards their captives, when a noble Abyssinian woman, who had been married to a Portuguese, seeing the shocking treatment that was awaiting them, set fire to several barrels of gunpowder that were in the tent, and at once destroyed herself, her companions, and those that were about to abuse them.

THE queen and the patriarch, after travelling through most difficult ways, and being hospitably entertained wherever they passed, at last took up their residence in the Jews mountain, a place inaccessible in point of strength, having but one entrance, and that very difficult, being also defended by a multitude of inhabitants who dwell on a large plain on the top of that mountain, where there is plenty of space to plow and sow, and a large stream of water that runs through the whole of it. Here they staid two months, as well to repose themselves as to give the king time to relieve them. After hearing that he was in motion, they left the mountain of the Jews, and met him on his march towards them.

CLAUDIUS shewed great signs of sorrow for the death of Don Christopher, and mourned three days. He then sent 3000 ounces of gold to be divided among the Portuguese, who, in the place of Don Christopher, had elected Alphonso Caldeyra

Caldeyra for their captain. These all flocked about the king, demanding that he would lead them to battle, that they might revenge the death of Don Christopher. Soon after which, Alphonso Caldeyra, exercising a horse in the field, was thrown off and died of the fall. In his place was elected Arius Dias, a Portuguese, born at Coimbra, whose mother was a black; he was very much favoured by the king, who now began to cultivate particular parties among the Portuguese, in order to divide them, and loosen their attachment for their patriarch, religion, and country.

THE king marched from Samen to Shawada, where the Moorish army came in full force to meet him. They were not, however, those formidable troops that had defeated and taken Don Christopher: For the Turkish foldiers, who were the strength of the army, expecting to have shared a great sum each for Don Christopher's ransom, thought themselves exceedingly injured by the manner in which he was put to death; and they had accordingly all to a man returned into Arabia, leaving Gagné to fight his own battles for his own profit. Nor was Claudius ignorant of this; and having collected all his army he gave the Moors battle on the 15th of November in a plain called Woggora, on the top of Lamalmon, in which the Moors, notwithstanding their recent victory, were not long in yielding to the superiority of the king's troops.

THE loss of the day was not inconsiderable. Mahomet, Osman, and Talil, three Moorish leaders, famous for their successes

successes against David the king's father, were this day slain in the field.

CLAUDIUS now descended into the low country of Derseguè, a very plentiful province, to which the Moors always retreated to strengthen themselves after any misfortune. This the king utterly destroyed; while Gragnè did the same with those countries in Dembea that had been recovered by the king. Claudius then returned to Shawa, and Gragnè to Derseguè. After that the king marched to Wainadega, and Gragnè, leaving Derseguè, advanced so near the king's army, that the outposts were nearly in sight of each other. In such a position of two such armies a battle became inevitable.

ACCORDINGLY, on the 10th of Feb. 1543, in the morning, the king, whose quarters were at Isaac's Bet, having well refreshed his army, marched out of his camp, and offered the enemy battle. The Portuguese, ever mindful of Don Christopher, fought with a bravery like to desperation, and the presence of the king keeping the Abyssinians in their duty, the van of Gragnè's army was pushed back upon the center, and much confusion was like to follow, till Gragnè advanced alone before them, waving and beckoning with his hands to his men that they should follow; and he was already come so near the Portuguese line as to be easily known and distinguished by them.

PETER LYON, a man of low stature, but very active and valiant, who had been valet-de-chambre to Don Christopher, having crept unseen along the course of a river a considerable space nearer, to make his aim more certain, shot Gragnè
with

with his musquet, so that the ball went through his body in the moment that both armies joined. Gragnè, finding that his wound was mortal, rode aside from the pressure of the troops towards a small thicket, and was closely followed by Peter Lyon, who saw him fall dead from his horse; and, desirous still to do further service in the battle, he would not incumber himself with his head, but, cutting off one of the ears, he put it in his pocket, and returned to the action. The Moorish army no sooner missed the presence of their general, than concluding all lost, they fell into confusion, and were pursued by the Portuguese and Abyssinians with a great slaughter, till the evening.

THE next morning, in surveying the dead, the body of Gragnè was found by an Abyssinian officer, who cut his head off, and brought it to the king, who received him with great honour and promise of reward. Peter Lyon stood a silent spectator of the impudence of his competitor; but Arius Dias, who knew the fact, desired the king's attention; saying, at the same time, "That he believed his majesty knew Gragnè well enough to suppose that he would not suffer any man to cut off his ear, without having it in his power to sever his head also; and consequently, that the ear must be in possession of a better man than he that had brought his head to the camp." Upon this, Peter Lyon pulled the ear out of his pocket, and laid it at the king's feet, amidst the acclamations of all present, for his bravery in revenging his old master's death, and his modesty in being content with having done so, without pretending to any other reward.

IN this battle, a son of Gragnè was taken prisoner, with many other considerable officers; and Del Wumbarea, wife of Gragnè, with Nur son of Mudgid, and a few troops, were obliged to throw themselves, for safety, among the wilds and woods of Atbara, thereby escaping with great difficulty.

THE king had now ample revenge of all the Moorish leaders who had reduced his father to such extremities, excepting Joram, who had driven the king from his hiding-place on mount Tfalem, and forced him to cross the Tacazzé on foot, with equal danger of being drowned or taken. This leader had, much against his will, been detained from the last battle, but, hoping to be still in time, was advancing by forced marches. The king, informed of his route, detached a party of his army to meet him before the news of the battle could reach him. They having placed themselves in ambush, he fell into it with his army, and was cut to pieces: this completed Claudius's account with his father's enemies.

DURING the late war with Gragné, the provinces of Tiggrè and Sirè had been the principal seat of the war. They were immediately in the way between Dembea, Masuah, and the other Moorish posts upon the Red Sea; the enemy had crossed them in all directions, and a proportionable devastation had been the consequence. Gragnè had burnt Axum, and destroyed all the churches and convents in Tiggrè. The king, now delivered from this enemy, had applied seriously to repair the ravages which had been made in the country. For this purpose he marched with a small army towards Axum, intending afterwards an expedition against the Galla.

It was in the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, while he was at Sirè, that there happened a very remarkable eclipse of the sun, which threw both court and army into great consternation. The prophets and diviners, ignorant monks of the desert, did not let slip so favourable an opportunity of increasing their consequence by augmenting this panic, and declaring this eclipse to portend nothing less than the renewal of the Moorish war. The year, however, passed in tranquillity and peace. Two old women, relations of the king, are said to have died; and it was in this great calamity that these diviners were to look for the completion of their prophecies. It is from this, however, that I have taken an opportunity to compare and rectify the dates of the principal transactions in the Abyssinian history. Sirè, where the king then resided, was a point very favourable for this application; for, in my journey from Masuah to Gondar, I had settled the latitude and longitude of that town by many observations.

ON the 22d of January 1770, at night, by a medium of different passages of stars over the meridian, and by an observation of the sun the noon of the following day, I found the latitude to be $14^{\circ} 4' 35''$ north, and the evening of the 23d, I observed an emersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, and by this I concluded the longitude of Sirè to be $38^{\circ} 0' 15''$ east of the meridian of Greenwich.

THE 13th year of the reign of Claudius falls to be in the 1553, and I find that there was a remarkable eclipse of the sun that did happen that same year on the 24th of January N. S. which answers to the 18th of the Ethiopic month Teir. The circumstances of this eclipse were as follow:

		<i>H.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>S.</i>	
- Beginning,	-	7	21	0	A. M.
Middle,	-	8	40	0	
End	- -	10	1	0	

The quantity of the sun's disk obscured was 10 digits ; so that this was so near to a total eclipse, it must have made an impression on the spectators minds that sufficiently accounts for the alarm and apprehensions it occasioned.

IN the month of January, nothing can be more beautiful than the sky in Siré ; not a cloud appears ; the sky is all of a pale azure, the colour lighter than an European sky, and of inexpressible beauty. The manner of applying this eclipse I shall mention hereafter.

ECLIPSES of the moon do not seem to be attended to in Abyssinia. The people are very little out in the night, inasmuch that I do not find one of these recorded throughout their history. The circumstances of the season make even those of the sun seldomer visible than in other climates, for in the rainy season, from April to September, the heavens are constantly overcast with clouds, so that it is mere accident if they can catch the moment it happens. But in the month of Teir, that is December and January, the sky is perfectly serene and clear, and at this time our eclipse above mentioned happened.

THE king now took into his consideration the state of the church. He had sent for an Abuna from Cairo to succeed Abuna Marcus, and he was now in his way to Abyssinia, while Bermudes, not able to bear this flight, on the other

hand, publicly declared to the king, that, having been ambassador from his father, and made his submission to the Roman pontiff, for himself and for his kingdom, he now expected that Claudius would make good his father's engagements, embrace the Roman Catholic religion himself, and, without delay, proclaim it as the established religion in Abyssinia. This the king positively refused to do, and a conversation ensued, which is repeated by Bermudes himself, and sufficiently shews the moderation of the young king, and the fiery, brutal zeal of that ignorant, bigotted, ill-mannered priest. Hitherto the Abyssinians heard the Portuguese mass with reverence and attention; and the Portuguese frequented the Abyssinian churches with complacency. They intermarried with each other, and the children seem to have been christened indifferently by the priests of either church. And this might have long continued, had it not been for the impatience of Bermudes.

THE king, seeing the danger of connecting himself with such a man, kept up every appearance of attachment to the Alexandrian church. Yet, says the Abyssinian historian who writes his life, it was well known that Claudius, in his heart, was a private, but perfect convert, to the Romish faith, and kept only from embracing it by his hatred to Bermudes, the constant persuasion of the empress Sabel Wenghel, and the recollection of the misfortunes of his father. Upon being required publicly to submit himself to the See of Rome, he declared that he had made no such promise; that he considered Bermudes as no patriarch, or, at best, only patriarch of the Franks; and that the Abuna of Abyssinia was the chief priest acknowledged by him. Bermudes told him, that he was accursed and excommunicated. Claudius answered, that

he, Bermudes, was a nestorian heretic, and worshipped four gods. Bermudes answered plainly, that he lied; that he would take every Portuguese from him, and return to India whence he came. The king's answer was, that he wished he would return to India; but as for the Portuguese, neither they, nor any other person, should leave his kingdom without his permission. Accordingly, having perfectly gained Arius Dias, he gave him the name of Marcus, with the command of the Portuguese, and sent him a standard with his own arms, to use instead of the king of Portugal's. But the Abyssinian page being met, on his return, with the Portuguese standard in his hand, by James Brito, he wrested it from him, felling him to the ground with a blow of his sword on the head.

FROM expostulations with the king, the matter of religion turned into disputes among the priests, at which the king always assisted in person. If we suppose they were no better sustained on the part of the Abyssinians than they were by the patriarch Bermudes, who we know was no great divine, we cannot expect much that was edifying from the arguments that either of them used. The Portuguese priests say *, that the king, struck with the ignorance of his own clergy, frequently took the discussion upon himself, which he managed with such force of reasoning as often to put the patriarch to a stand: From verbal disputes, which terminated in nothing, Bermudes was resolved to appeal to arguments in writing; and, with the help of those that were with him of the same faith, a fair state of the differences in question was made in a small book, and presented to the king, who read it with so much pleasure that he kept it constantly by him. This gave very great offence to the
Abyssinian

* Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 27.

Abyssinian clergy; and the Abuna being now arrived, the king desired of him liberty to read that book, which he refusing, put the young king into so violent a passion that he called the Abuna Mahometan and Infidel to his face.

THINGS growing worse and worse between the Portuguese and Abyssinians, by the incendiary spirit of the brutish Bermudes, from reproaches they came to blows; and this proceeded so far, that the Portuguese one night assaulted the king's tent, where they slew some, and grievously wounded others. Upon this, the king, desirous to estrange him a little from the Portuguese, sent Bermudes to the country of the Gafats, where he gave him large appointments, in hopes that the natural turbulence of his temper would involve him in some difficulties. And there he staid seven months, oppressing the poor ignorant people, and frightening them with the noise of his fire-arms. During this period, the king went on an expedition against the Galla; Bermudes then returned to court, where he found that Arius Dias was dead, and a great many of the Portuguese very well attached to the king. But he began his old work of dissension, insomuch that the king determined to banish him to a mountain for life.

GASPAR DE SUZA now commanded the Portuguese instead of Arius Dias, a man equally beloved by his own nation and the king. By his persuasions, and that of Kafmati Robel, the banishment to the mountain was laid aside; but Bermudes was privately persuaded to embark for India while it was yet time; and accordingly he repaired to Dobarwa, where he remained two years, as it should seem, perfectly quiet, neglected, and forlorn; saying daily mass to ten Portuguese

tuguese who had settled in that town after the defeat of Don Christopher. He then went to Masuah, and the monsoon being favourable, he embarked on board a Portuguese vessel, carrying with him the ten Portuguese that were settled at Dobarwa, who all arrived safely at Goa.

ST IGNATIUS, founder of the Order of Jesuits, was then at Rome in the dawn of his holiness. The conversion of Abyssinia seemed of such consequence to him, that he resolved himself to go and be the apostle of the kingdom. But the pope, who had conceived other hopes of him and his Order more important and nearer at hand, absolutely refused this offer. One of his society, Nugnez Baretto, was, however, fixed upon for patriarch, without any notice being taken of Don John Bermudes. By him Ignatius sent a letter addressed to Claudius, which is to be found in the collections *. It does not, I think, give us any idea of the ingenuity or invention of that great saint. It seems mostly to beg the question, and to contain little else than texts of scripture for his future missionaries to preach and write on, relative to the difference of tenets of the two churches.

WITH this letter, and a number of priests, Baretto came to Goa. But news being arrived there of king Claudius's steady aversion to the Catholic church, it was then thought better, rather than risk the patriarchal dignity, to send Andrew Oviedo bishop of Hierapolis, and Melchior Carneyro bishop of Nice, with several other priests, as ambassadors from the governor of India to Claudius, with proper credentials. They arrived safely at Masuah in 1558, five days before the Turkish basha came with his fleet and army, and took possession of

* Dated at Rome 16th Feb. 1555. See Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 22.

of Mafuah and Arkeeko, though these places had been occupied by the Turks two years before.

WHEN the arrival of these Portuguese was intimated to Claudius, he was exceedingly glad, as he considered them as an accession of strength. But when, on opening the letter, he saw they were priests, he was very much troubled, and said, that he wondered the king of Portugal should meddle so much with his affairs : that he and his predecessors knew no obedience due but to the chair of St Mark, or acknowledged any other patriarch but that of Alexandria ; nevertheless, continued he with his usual goodness and moderation, since they are come so far out of an honest concern for me, I shall not fail to send proper persons to receive and conduct them. This he did, and the two bishops and their companions were immediately brought to court. It was at this time that the dispute about the two natures began, in which the king took so considerable a part. He was strenuous, eloquent, and vehement in the discussion ; when that was ended, he still preserved his usual moderation and kindness for the Portuguese priests.

NUGNEZ died in India, and Oviedo succeeded him as patriarch to Abyssinia, it having been so appointed by the pope from the beginning of their mission.

CLAUDIUS had no children ; a treaty was therefore set on foot, at the instance of the empress Sabel Wenghel, for ransoming the prince Menas who had been taken prisoner in his father David's time, and ever since kept in confinement among the Moors, upon a high mountain in Adcl.
The

The same had happened to a son of Gragné likewise, made prisoner at the battle of Wainadega, when his father was slain by Claudius. The Moors settled in Abyssinia, as well as all the Abyssinian rebels who had forsaken their allegiance or religion during the war, were to a man violently against setting Menas at liberty, for he was the only brother Claudius had, and a disputed succession was otherwise probable, which was what the Moors longed for. Besides this, Menas was exceedingly brave, of a severe and cruel temper, a mortal enemy to the Mahometans, and at this time in the flower of his age, and perfectly fit to govern. It was not, then, by any means, an eligible measure for those who were naturally the objects of his hatred, to provide such an assistant and successor to Claudius.

DEL WUMBAREA thought, that, having lost her husband, to be deprived of her son likewise, was more than fell to her share in the common cause. She, too, had therefore applied to the basha of Masuah, who looked no farther than to a ransom, and cared very little what prince reigned in Abyssinia. He, therefore, undertook the management of the matter, and declared that he would send Menas to the Grand Signior, as soon as an answer should come from Constantinople, while Claudius protested, that he would give up Gragné's son to the Portuguese, if the ransom for his brother was not immediately agreed on. This resolution, on both sides, quickly removed all objections. Four thousand ounces of gold were paid to the Moors and the basha; Menas was released and sent home to Claudius, who thereupon, in his turn, set Ali Gerad, son of Gragné by Del Wumbarea, at liberty, and with him Waraba Guta brother of the king of Adel, and this finished the transaction.

I must here observe, that what Bermudes * says, that Del Wumbarea was taken prisoner and given in marriage to Arius Dias, was but a fable, as appears both from the beginning and sequel of the narrative. Del Wumbarea having thus obtained her son, took a very early opportunity of shewing she had not yet forgot the father. Nur, governor of Zeyla, son of Mudgid, who had slain the princes imprisoned upon the mountain of Geshen, was deeply in love with this lady, and had deserved well of her, for he had assisted her in making her escape into Atbara that day her husband was slain. But this heroine had constantly refused to listen to any proposals; nay, had vowed she never would give her hand in marriage to any man till he should first bring her the head of Claudius who had slain her husband. Nur willingly accepted the condition, which gave him few rivals, but rather seemed to be reserved for him, and out of the power of every one else.

CLAUDIUS, before this, had marched towards Adel, when he received a message from Nur, that, though Gragné was dead, there still remained a governor of Zeyla, whose family was chosen as a particular instrument for shedding the blood of the Abyssinian princes; and desired him, therefore, to be prepared, for he was speedily to set out to come to him. Claudius had been employed in various journeys through different parts of his kingdom, repairing the churches which Gragné and the other Moors had burnt; and he was then rebuilding that of Debra Werk † when this message of

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Nur

* See Bermudes's account of these times, printed at Lisbon by Francis Correa, A. D. 1565.

† The Mountain of Gold.

Nur, was brought to him. This prince was of a temper never to avoid a challenge; and if he did not march against Nur immediately, he said no longer than to complete his army as far as possible. He then began his march for Adel, very much, as it is said, against the advice of his friends.

THAT such advice should be given, at this particular time, appears strange; for till now he had been constantly victorious, and his kingdom was perfectly obedient, which was not the case when any one of the former battles had been fought. But many prophecies were current in the camp, that the king was to be unfortunate this campaign, and was to lose his life in it. These unfortunate rumours tended much to discourage the army, at the same time that they seemed to have a contrary effect on the king, and to confirm him in his resolution to fight. The truth is, the clergy, who had seen the country delivered by him from the Mahometans in a manner almost miraculous, and the constancy with which he withstood the Romish patriarch, and frustrated the designs of his father against the Alexandrian church, and who had experienced his extreme liberality in rebuilding the churches, had wrought his young mind to such a degree of enthusiasm that he was often heard to say, he preferred a death in the middle of an army of Infidels to the longest and most prosperous life that ever fell to the lot of man. It needed not a prophet to have foretold the likely issue of a battle in these circumstances, where the king, careless of life, rather sought death than victory; where the number of Portuguese was so small as to be incapable, of themselves, to effect any thing; where, even of that number, those that were attached to the king were looked upon as traitors by those of the party of the patriarch; and where

the Abyſſinians, from their repeated quarrels and diſputes, heartily hated them all.

THE armies were drawn up and ready to engage, when the chief prieſt of Debra Libanos came to the king to tell him a dream, or viſion, which warned him not to fight; but the Moors were then advancing, and the king on horſe-back made no reply, but marched briskly forward to the enemy. The cowardly Abyſſinians, upon the firſt fire, fled, leaving the king engaged in the middle of the Moorish army with twenty horſe and eighteen Portuguese muſqueers, who were all ſlain around his perſon; and he himſelf fell, after fighting manfully, and receiving twenty wounds. His head was cut off, and by Nur delivered to Del Wumbarea, who directed it to be tied by the hair to the branch of a tree before her door, that ſhe might keep it conſtantly in ſight. Here it remained three years, till it was purchaſed from her by an Armenian merchant, her firſt grief, having, it is probable, ſubſided upon the acquisition of a new huſband. The merchant carried the head to Antioch, and buried it there in the ſepulchre of a ſaint of the ſame name.

THUS died king Claudius in the 19th year of his reign, who, by his virtues and capacity, might hold a firſt place among any ſeries of kings we have known, victorious in every action he fought, except in that one only in which he died. A great ſlaughter was made after this among the routed, and many of the firſt nobility were ſlain in endeavouring to eſcape; among the reſt, the dreamer from Debra Lebanos, his viſion, by which he knew the king's death, not having extended ſo far as to reveal his own.

The Abyssinians immediately transferred the name of this prince into their catalogue of Saints, and he is called St Claudius in that country to this day. Though endowed with every other virtue that entitled him to his place in the kalendar, he seems to have wanted one—that of dying in charity with his enemies.

THIS battle was fought on the 22d March 1559; and the victory gained by Nur was a complete one. The king and most of his principal officers were slain; great part of the army taken prisoners, the rest dispersed, and the camp plundered; so that no Moorish general had ever returned home with the glory that he did. But afterwards, in his behaviour, he exhibited a spectacle more memorable, and that did him more honour than the victory itself; for, when he drew near to Adel, he clothed himself in poor attire like a common soldier, and bare-headed, mounted on an ordinary mule, with an old saddle and tattered accoutrements, he forbade the songs and praise with which it is usual to meet conquerors in that country when returning with victory from the field. He declined also all share in the success of that day, declaring that the whole of it was due to God alone, to whose mercy and immediate interposition he owed the destruction of the Christian army.

THE unworthy and unfortunate John Bermudes having arrived in Portugal from India, continued there till his death; and, in the inscription over his tomb, is called only *Patriarch of Alexandria*. Yet it is clear, from the history of these times, that he was first ordained by the old patriarch Marcus; and that the pope, Paul III. only confirmed the ordination of this heretical schismatical prelate, though we have

stated that he was ordained by the pope, according to his own assertion, to be patriarch of Alexandria, Abyssinia, and the Sea. Bermudes lived many years after this, and never resigned any of his charges.

HOWEVER, on his arrival in Europe, several supposed well-meaning persons at Rome began to discourse among themselves, as if the conversion of Abyssinia had not had a fair trial when trusted in the hands of such a man as Bermudes. Scandalous stories as to his moral character were propagated at Rome to strengthen this. He was said to have stolen a golden cup in Abyssinia*; but this does not appear to me in any shape probable, or like the manners of the man. He was a simple, ill-bred zealot, exceedingly vain, but in no wise coveting riches or gain of any sort. Sebastian king of Portugal, hearing the bad posture of the Catholic religion in Abyssinia, and the small hopes of the conversion of that country, besought the pope to send all the missionaries that were in that kingdom to preach the gospel in Japan: but Oviedo stated such strong reasons in his letter to Rome, that he was confirmed in the mission of Ethiopia.

* Purch. vol. 2.





MENAS, OR ADAMAS SEGUED.

From 1559 to 1563.

*Babarnagash rebels, proclaims Tascar King—Defeated by the King—
Cedes Dobarwa to the Turks, and makes a League with the Basba of
Masuah.*

MENAS succeeded his brother Claudius, and found his kingdom in almost as great confusion as it had been left by his father David. His first campaign was against Radaet the Jew. The king attacked him at his strongest post in Samen, where he fought him with various success; and the enterprise did not seem much advanced, when a hermit, residing in these mountains, probably tired with the neighbourhood of such troublesome people, came and told the king, it had been revealed to him that the conquest of the Jews was not allotted to him, nor was their time yet come.

WHILE the king seemed disposed to avail himself of the hermit's warning, as a decent excuse to get rid of an affair that did not succeed to his mind, an accident happened which determined him to quit his present undertaking. Two men, shepherds of Ebenaat in Belessen, from what injury is not known, engaged two of the king's servants, who
were

were their relations, to introduce them into Menas's tent while sleeping, with a design to murder him in his bed. While they were preparing to execute their intention, one of them stumbled over the lamp that was burning, and threw it down. The king awakening, and challenging him with a loud voice, the assassin struck at him with his knife, but so feebly, from the fright, that he dropt the weapon upon the king's cloak without hurting him. They fled immediately out of the tent, but were taken at Ebonaat the next day, and brought back to the king, who gave orders to the judges to try them: they were both condemned, the one to be thrust through with lances, the other to be stoned to death; after which, both their bodies were thrown to the dogs and to the beasts of the field, as is practised constantly in all cases of high-treason.

THE second year of the reign of Menas was ushered in by a conspiracy among the principal men of his court, at the head of which was Isaac Baharnagash, an old and tried servant of his brother Claudius. This officer had been treated ill by Menas in the beginning of his reign; and, knowing the prince's violent and cruel disposition, he could not persuade himself that he was yet in safety.

MENAS, to suppress this rebellion in its infancy, sent Zara Johannes, an old officer, before him, with what forces he could collect in the instant; but Isaac, informed of the bad state of that army, and consequently of his own superiority, left him no time to strengthen himself, but fell furiously upon him, and, with little resistance, dispersed his army. This loss did not discourage the king; he had assembled a very considerable force, and, desirous still to encrease

it, he was advancing slowly that he might collect the scattered remains of the army that had been defeated. The Baharnagash, though victorious, saw with some concern that he could not avoid the king, whose courage and capacity, both as a soldier and a general, left him every thing to fear for his success.

EVER since the massacre of the princes upon mount Gethen by vizir Mudgid, in the reign of David III. none of the remains of the royal family had been confined as heretofore. Tascan, Menas's nephew, was then at liberty, and, to strengthen his cause, was proclaimed king by the Baharnagash, soon after the defeat of Menas's army under Zara Johannes. He was a prince very mild and affable in his manners, in all respects very unlike his uncle then reigning.

It was on the 1st of July 1561, that the king attacked the Baharnagash in the plain of Woggora; and, having entirely routed his army, Tascan was taken prisoner, and ordered by the king his uncle to be carried to the brink of the high rock of Lamalmon, and, having been thrown over the steep precipice, he was dashed to pieces. Isaac himself escaped very narrowly, flying to the frontier of his government in the neighbourhood of Masuah. The Baharnagash comprehended distinctly to what a dangerous situation he was now reduced. No hopes of safety remained but in a peace with the basha. This at first appeared not easily obtained; for, while Isaac remained in his duty in the reign of Claudius, he had fought with the basha, and lost his brother in the engagement. But present necessity overcame the memory of past injuries.

SAMUR Bafha was a man of capacity and temper; he had been in possession of Mafuah ever since the year 1558. He saw his own evident interest in the measure, and appeared full as forward as the Baharnagash to complete it. Isaac ceded Dobarwa to the bafha, and put him into immediate possession of it, and all the low country between that and Mafuah. By this acquisition, the Turks, before masters of the sea-coast, became possessed of the whole of the flat country corresponding thereto, as far as the mountains. Dobarwa is a large trading town, situated in a country abounding with provisions of all kinds which Mafuah wanted, and it was the key of the province of Tigré and the high land of Abyssinia.

MENAS, at his accession, had received kindly the compliments of congratulation made by the Portuguese patriarch, Oviedo. But hearing that he still continued to preach, and that the effect of this was frequent divisions and animosities among the people, he called him into his presence, and strictly commanded him to desist, which the patriarch positively refusing, the king lost all patience, and fell violently upon him, beating him without mercy, tearing his clothes and beard, and taking his chalice from him, that he might prevent him from saying mass. He then banished him to a desert mountain, together with Francis Lopez, where for seven months he endured all manner of hardships.

THE king, in the mean time, published many rigorous proclamations against the Portuguese. He would not permit them to marry with Abyssinians. Those that were already married he forbade to go to the Catholic churches with their husbands; and, having again called the patriarch

into his presence, he ordered him forthwith to leave his kingdom upon pain of death. But Oviedo, who seems to have had an ambition to be the proto-martyr, refused absolutely to obey these commands. He declared that the orders of God were those he obeyed, not the sinful ordinances of man; and, letting slip his cloak from his shoulders, he offered his bare neck to the king to strike. This answer and gesture so incensed Menas, that, drawing his sword, he would have very soon put the patriarch in possession of the martyrdom he coveted, had it not been for the interposition of the queen and officers that stood round him.

Oviedo, after having been again soundly beaten, was banished a second time to the mountain; and in this sentence were included all the rest of the Portuguese priests, as well as others. But the bishop would not submit to this punishment, but with the Portuguese, his countrymen, joined the Baharnagash, who had already completed his treaty with Samur Basha.

ISAAC, before the Portuguese priests, had shewn a desire of becoming Catholic, and of protecting, or even embracing, their religion; and they, on their part, had assured him of a powerful and speedy succour from India, which was just what he wanted; and with this view he had placed himself to the greatest advantage, avoiding a battle, and awaiting those auxiliaries, of the arrival of which the king was very apprehensive. But the season of ships coming from India had passed without any appearance of Portuguese, and the king was resolved to try his fortune without expecting what another season might produce. On the other hand, Isaac, strengthened by his league with the basha, thought himself

himself in a condition to take the field, rather than to lessen his reputation by constantly declining battle.

IN these dispositions both armies met, and the confederates were again beaten by the king, with very little loss or resistance. This battle was fought on the 20th of April 1562. Immediately after this victory the king marched to Shoa, and sent several detachments of his army before him to surprise the robbers called Dobas, and drive off their cattle. What he intended by retiring so far from his enemies, the Baharnagash and Basha, is what we do not know. Both of them were yet alive, but probably so weakened by their last defeat as to leave no apprehensions of being able to molest the country by any incursions.

THE king, being advanced into the province of Ogge, was taken ill of the Kolla, or low-country fever, and, after a few days illness, he died there on the 13th of January 1563, leaving three sons, Sertza Denghel, who succeeded him, Tascar, and Lefana Christos.

SOME European historians * have advanced that Menas was defeated and slain in this last engagement just now mentioned. This, however, is expressly contradicted in the annals of these times, which mention the death of the king in the terms I have here related; nor were either of the chiefs of the rebels, the Basha or Baharnagash, slain that day. The rebellion still continued, Isaac having proclaimed a prince of the name of John to be king in place of Tascar, his deceased brother.

* Ludolf, lib. 2. cap. 6.

MENAS was a prince of a very morose and violent disposition, but very well adapted to the time in which he lived; brave in his person, active and attentive to the affairs of government. He was sober, and an enemy to all sorts of pleasure; frugal, and, in his dress or stile of living, little different from any soldier in his army.

THESE qualities made him feared by the great, without being beloved by the common soldiers accustomed to the liberality and magnificence of Claudius; and this want of popularity gave the Romish priests an opportunity to blacken his character beyond what in truth he deserved. Thus, they say, that he had changed his religion during his imprisonment, and turned Mahometan, and that it was from the Moors he learned that ferocity of manners. But to this the answer is easy, That the manners of his own countrymen, that is of mountaineers without any profession but war and blood, in which they had been exercised for centuries, were, probably of themselves, much more fierce and barbarous than any he could learn among the people of Adel, occupied from time immemorial in commerce and the pursuit of riches, and necessarily engaged in an honest intercourse, and practice of hospitality, with all the various nations that traded with them. Besides, were this otherwise, he never had any society with these Moors. Banishment to the top of a mountain* would have been his fate in Abyssinia, had he lived a few years earlier or later than he did. Yet the mountain upon which the royal family was confined had not yet produced one of such savage manners; and it is not probable

* To Gessen or Wechné.

probable that he was more strictly guarded in Adel than he would have been in his own country.

As to his religion, we can only say that he abhorred the Romish faith, from the behaviour of those that professed it; and, that he had abundant reason so to do, we need only appeal to their conduct in the preceding reign, according to the accounts given by the Catholics themselves. Let any man consider a king such as Claudius was; seated on his throne in the midst of his courtiers and captains; cursed and excommunicated; called heretic and liar to his face by an ignorant peasant and stranger, such as John Bermudes; attacked in the night, and forced to fly for his life by a body of strangers who depended upon him for their daily bread: Next consider Menas, at his first accession, desiring their patriarch to desist from preaching a religion that was fatal to the quiet of his kingdom by sowing dissensions among it as it had done in the two preceding reigns; and then figure a fanatic priest, declaring that he would neither depart nor obey these orders; then say what would have been done to strangers in France, Spain, or Portugal, that had behaved in this manner to the sovereign or ministers of these countries. Add to this, that all the Portuguese to a man appeared in the army of a rebel subject in the last battle, supporting the cause of a pretender to his crown. If, upon a fair review of all this, it is any matter of surprise that he should be averse to such people and behaviour, I am no judge of the fair feelings of man, and the duty a prince owes to himself or posterity, his country or dignity.

As to his inclination to the Mahometan religion, the fact is, that he opposed it even with his sword during his whole
I reign,

reign, and never swerved from his attachment to the church of Alexandria, or his friendship and respect to the Abuna Yousef, to the end of his life, as far as we can learn from history. And least, of all people in the world, does it become the Roman Catholics to accuse him of being Mahometan, because a letter is still extant to Menas from pope Paul III *, wherein the pope styles him beloved *son in Christ*, and the *most holy of priests*.

SERTZA DENGHEL, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1563 to 1595.

King crowned at Axum—Abyssinia invaded by the Galla—Account of that People—The king defeats the Army of Adcl—Beats the Falasha, and kills their King—Battle of the Mareb—Basha slain, and Turks expelled from Dobarwa—King is poisoned—Names Za Denghel his Successor.

MENAS was succeeded by his son, Sertza Denghel, who took the name of Melec Segued. He was only twelve years old when he came to the throne, and was crowned at Axum with all the ancient ceremonies. The beginning of his

* See Le Grande's History of Abyssinia.

his reign was marked by a mutiny of his soldiers, who, joining themselves to some Mahometans, plundered the town, and then disbanded. A misunderstanding also happened with Ayto Hamelmal, son to Romana Werk, daughter of Hatzé Naod, which threatened many misfortunes in its consequences.

TECLA ASFADIN, governor of Tigré, was ordered by the king to march against him; and the armies fought with equal advantage. But Hamelmal dying soon after, his party dispersed without further trouble. Fasil, too, his cousin, who had been appointed governor of Damot, rebelled soon after, and was defeated by the king, who this year (the fourth of his reign) commanded his army for the first time in person, and greatly contributed to the victory, though he was but then sixteen years of age.

THE sixth year of his reign he marched against a clan of Galla, called Azé, whom he often beat, staying in the country two whole years. Upon his return, he found the Baharnagash, Isaac and Harla, and other malcontents, when a sort of a pacification followed; and having received from the rebels considerable presents, he sat down at Dobia, a small town in Dembea, where he passed the winter.

ALL this time Oviedo and the Portuguese did not appear at court. The king, however, did not molest the priests in their baptisms, preachings, or any of their functions. He often spoke favourably of their moral characters, their sobriety, patience, and decency of their lives; but he condemned decisively the whole of their religious tenets, which he pronounced to be full of danger and contradiction, and destructive.

structive of civil order and monarchical government. At this period the Galla again made an irruption into Gojam.

It is now time we should speak of this nation, which has contributed more to weakening and reducing the Abyssinian empire, than all their civil wars, and all the foreign enemies put together. When I spoke of the languages of the several nations in Abyssinia, I took occasion merely to mention the origin of these Galla, and their progress northward, till their first hostile appearance in Abyssinia. I shall now proceed to lay before the reader what further I have collected concerning them. Many of them were in the king's service while I was in Abyssinia; and, from a multitude of conversations I had with all kinds of them, I flatter myself I have gathered the best accounts regarding these tribes.

THE Galla are a very numerous nation of Shepherds, who probably lived under or beyond the Line. What the cause of their emigration was we do not pretend to say with certainty, but they have, for many years, been in an uniform progress northward. They were at first all infantry, and said the country they came from would not permit horses to breed in it, as is the case in 13° north of the Line round Sennaar. Upon coming northward, and conquering the Abyssinian provinces, and the small Mahometan districts bordering on them, they have acquired a breed of horses, which they have multiplied so industriously that they are become a nation of cavalry, and now hold their infantry in very little esteem.

As under the Line, to the south of Abyssinia, the land is exceedingly high, and the sun seldom makes its appearance on account of the continual rains, the Galla are consequently of a brown complexion, with long black hair. Some, indeed, who live in the valleys of the low country, are perfectly black. Although the principal food of this people at first was milk and butter, yet, when they advanced into drier climates, they learned of the Abyssinians to plow and sow the fields, and to make bread. They seem to affect the number seven, and have divided their immense multitude threefold by that number. They all agree, that, when the nation advanced to the Abyssinian frontiers, they were then in the centre of the continent. The ground beginning to rise before them, seven of their tribes or nations filed off to the east towards the Indian Ocean; and, after making settlements there, and multiplying exceedingly, they marched forward due south into Bali and Dawaro, which they first wasted by constant incursions, then conquered and settled there in the reign of David III. in 1537.

ANOTHER division of seven tribes went off to the west about the same time, and spread themselves in another semicircle round the south side of the Nile, and all along its banks round Gojam, and to the east behind the country of the Agows, (which are on the east side of the Nile) to that of the Gongas and Gafats. The high woody banks of this river have hitherto been their barrier to the southward; not but that they have often fought for, and often conquered, and still oftener plundered, the countries on the Abyssinian side of that river; and, from this reign downwards, the scene of action with the Abyssinians has constantly been on the east side of the river. All I mean is, they have never made a set-

ment on the Abyssinian side of the Nile, except such tribes of them as, from wars among themselves, have gone over to the king of Abyssinia and obtained lands on the banks of that river, opposite to the nation they have revolted from, against which they have ever after been the securest bulwark.

A THIRD division of seven tribes remained in the center, due south of the low country of Shoa; and these are the least known, as having made the fewest incursions. They have, indeed, possessed Walaka, a small province between Amhara and Shoa; but this has been permitted politically by the governor of Shoa, as a barrier between him and Abyssinia, on whose sovereign he scarcely acknowledges any dependence but for form's sake, his province being at present an hereditary government descending from father to son.

ALL these tribes of Galla gird Abyssinia round at all points from east to west, making inroads, and burning and murdering all that fall into their hands. The privities of the men they cut off, dry, and hang them up in their houses. They are so merciless as to spare not even women with child, whom they rip up in hopes of destroying a male. The western part of these Galla, which surrounds the peninsula of Gojam and Damot, are called the Boren Galla; and those that are to the east are named Bertuma Galla, though this last word is seldom used in history, where the Galla to the westward are called Boren; and the others Galla merely, without any other addition. All these tribes, though the most cruel that ever appeared in any country, are yet governed by the strictest discipline at home, where the smallest broil or quarrel among individuals is taken cognizance of, and receives immediate punishment.

EACH of the three divisions of Galla elect a king, that is, there is a king for every seven tribes. There is also a kind of nobility among them, from whose families alone the sovereign can be chosen. But there are certain degrees of merit (all warlike) that raise, from time to time, their plebeian families to nobility, and the right of suffrage. No one of these nobles can be elected till past forty years of age, unless he has slain with his own hand a number of men which, added to his years, makes up forty.

THE council of each of the seven tribes first meets separately in its own district: Here it determines how many are necessary to be left behind for the governing, guarding, and cultivating the territory, while those fixed upon by most votes go as delegates to meet the representatives of the other nations at the domicil, or head-quarters of the king, among the tribe from which the sovereign of the last seven years was taken. Here they sit down under a tree which seems to be sacred, and the god of all the nations. It is called Wanzey*; has a white flower, and great quantity of foliage, and is very common in Abyssinia. After a variety of votes, the number of candidates is reduced to four, and the suffrage of six of these nations go then no farther; but the seventh, whose turn it is to have a king out of their tribe, choose, from among the four, one, whom they crown with a garland of Wanzey, and put a sceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood in his hands, which they call Bucu.

* See the article Wanzey in the Appendix.

THE king of the western Galla is stiled Lubo, the other Mooty. At this assembly, the king allots to each their scene of murder and rapine; but limits them always to speedy returns in case the body of the nation should have occasion for them. The Galla are reputed very good soldiers for surprise, and in the first attack, but have not constancy or perseverance. They accomplish incredible marches; swim rivers holding by the horses tail, (an exercise to which both they and their horses are perfectly trained;) do the utmost mischief possible in the shortest time; and rarely return by the same way they came. They are excellent light horse for a regular army in an enemy's country.

IRON is very scarce among them, so that their principal arms are poles sharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, which they use like lances. Their shields are made of bulls hides of a single fold, so that they are very subject to warp in heat, or become too pliable and soft in wet weather. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the report of their cruelty made such an impression upon the Abyssinians, that, on their first engagements they rarely stood firmly the Galla's first onset. Besides this, the shrill and very barbarous noise they are always used to make at the moment they charge, used to terrify the horses and riders, so that a flight generally followed the attack made by Galla horse.

THESE melancholy and frantic howls I had occasion to hear often in those engagements that happened while I was in Abyssinia. The Edjow, a body of Galla who had been in the late king Joas's service, and were relations to him by his mother, who was of that clan of southern Galla, were constantly in the rebel army, and always in the most dis-

affected part, who, with the troops of Begemder and Lafta, attacked the king's household, where he was in perfon; and, though they behaved with a bravery even to rashnefs, moft of them loft their lives, upon the long pikes of the king's black horfe, without ever doing any notable execution, as thefe horfes were too-well trained to be at all moved with their fhrieks, when they charged, though their bravery and fidelity merited a better fate.

THE women are faid to be very fruitful. They do not confine themfelves even a day after labour, but wafh and return to their work immediately. They plow, fow, and reap. The cattle tread out the corn, but the men are the herdsmen, and take charge of the cattle in the fields.

BOTH fexes are fomething lefs than the middle fize; exceedingly light and agile. Both, but efpecially the men, plait their hair with the bowels and guts of oxen, which they wear likewife, like belts, twifted round their middle; and thefe, as they putrify, occafion a terrible ftench. Both copioufly anoint their heads and bodies with butter, or melted greafe, which is continually raining from them, and which indicates that they came from a country hotter than that which they now poffefs. They greatly refemble the Hottentots in this filthy tafte of drefs. The reft of their body is naked; a piece of fkin only covers them before; and they wear a goat's fkin on their fhoulders, in fhape of a woman's handkerchief, or tippet.

It has been faid*, that no religion was ever difcovered among.

* Jerome Lobo Hift. of Abyffinia ap. Le Grande.

among them. I imagine that the facts upon which this opinion is founded have never been sufficiently investigated. The Wanzey-tree, under which their kings are crowned, is avowedly worshipped for a god in every tribe. They have certain stones also, for an object of their devotion, which I never could sufficiently understand to give further description of them. But they certainly pay adoration to the moon, especially the new moon, for of this I have frequently been a witness. They likewise worship certain stars in particular positions, and at different times of the year, and are, in my opinion, still in the ancient religion of Sabaism. All of them believe that, after death, they are to live again; that they are to rise with their body, as they were on earth, to enter into another life they know not where, but they are to be in a state of body infinitely more perfect than the present, and are to die no more, nor suffer grief, sickness, or trouble of any kind. They have very obscure, or no ideas at all of future punishment; but their reward is to be a moderate state of enjoyment with the same family and persons with which they lived on earth. And this is very nearly the same belief with the other Pagan nations in Africa with which I have conversed intimately; and this is what writers generally call a belief of the immortality of the soul. Nor did I ever know one savage that had a more distinct idea of it, or ever separated it from the immortality of the body.

THE Galla to the south are mostly Mahometans; on the east and west chiefly Pagans. They intermarry with each other, but suffer no strangers to live among them. The Moors, however, by courage, patience, and attention, have found out the means of trading with them in a tolerable degree

degree of safety. The goods they carry are coarse Surat blue cloaths, called *marowty*; also myrrh and salt. This last is the principal and most valuable article.

THE Galla sometimes marry the Abyssinian women, but the issue of those marriages are incapable of all employment. Their form of marriage is the following: The bridegroom, standing before the parents of the bride, holds grass in his right hand and the dung of a cow in his left. He then says, "May this never enter, nor this ever come out, "if he does not do what he promises;" that is, may the grass never enter the cow's mouth to feed it, or may she die before it is discharged. Matrimonial vows, moreover, are very simple; he swears to his bride that he shall give her meat and drink while living, and bury her when dead.

POLYGAMY is allowed among them, but the men are commonly content with one wife. Such, indeed, is their moderation in this respect, that it is the women that solicit the men to increase the number of their wives. The love of their children seems to get a speedy ascendancy over passion and pleasure, and is a noble part of the character of these savages that ought not to be forgot. A young woman, having a child or two by her husband, intreats and solicits him that he would take another wife, when she names to him all the beautiful girls of her acquaintance, especially those that she thinks likeliest to have large families. After the husband has made his choice, she goes to the tent of the young woman, and sits behind it in a suppliant posture, till she has excited the attention of the family within. She then, with an audible voice, declares who she is; that she is daughter of such a one; that her husband has

has all the qualifications for making a woman happy ; that she has only two children by him ; and, as her family is so small, she comes to solicit their daughter for her husband's wife, that their families may be joined together, and be strong ; and that her children, from their being few in number, may not fall a prey to their enemies in the day of battle ; for the Galla always fight in families, whether against one another, or against other enemies.

WHEN she has thus obtained a wife for her husband, she carries her home, puts her to bed with her husband, where, having left her, she feasts with the bride's relations. There the children of the first marriage are produced, and the men of the bride's family put each their hands upon these children's heads, and afterwards take the oath in the usual manner, to live and die with them as their own offspring. The children, then, after this species of adoption, go to their relations, and visit them for the space of seven days. All that time the husband remains at home in possession of his new bride ; at the end of which he gives a feast, when the first wife is seated by her husband, and the young one serves the whole company. The first wife from this day keeps her precedence ; and the second is treated by the first wife like a grown up-daughter. I believe it would be very long before the love of their families would introduce this custom among the young women of Britain.

WHEN a father dies and leaves many children, the eldest succeeds to the whole inheritance without division ; nor is he obliged, at any time, or by any circumstance, to give his brothers a part afterwards. If the father is alive when the son first begins to shave his head, which is a declaration of manhood,

manhood, he gives two or three milk-cows, or more, according to his rank and fortune. These, and all their produce, remain the property of the child to whom they were given by his father; and these the brother is obliged to pay to him upon his father's death, in the same number and kinds. The eldest brother, is moreover, obliged to give the sister, whenever she is marriageable, whatever other provision the father may have made in his lifetime for her, with all its increase from the day of the donation.

WHEN the father becomes old and unfit for war, he is obliged to surrender his whole effects to his eldest son, who is bound to give him aliment, and nothing else; and, when the eldest brother dies, leaving younger brothers behind him, and a widow young enough to bear children, the youngest brother of all is obliged to marry her; but the children of the marriage are always accounted as if they were the eldest brother's; nor does this marriage of the youngest brother to the widow entitle him to any part of the deceased's fortune.

THE southern Galla are called Elma Kilelloo, Elma Goo-deroo, Elma Robali, Elma Doolo, Elma Bodena, Elma Horreta, and Elma Michaeli; these are the seven southern nations which the Mahometan traders pass through in their way to Narea, the southernmost country the Abyssinians ever conquered.

THE western Galla for their principal clans have the Djawi, Edjow or Ayzo, and Toluma, and these were the clans we principally fought with when I was in Abyssinia. They are chiefly Pagans. Some of their children, who were left

young in court, when their fathers fled, after the murder of the late king their master, were better Christians and better foldiers than any Abyſſinians we had.

It is not a matter of ſmall curioſity to know what is their food, that is ſo eaſy of carriage as to enable them to traverse immense deſerts, that they may, without warning, fall upon the towns and villages in the cultivated country of Abyſſinia. This is nothing but coffee roaſted, till it can be pulveriſed, and then mixed with butter to a conſiſtency that will ſuffer it to be rolled up in balls, and put in a leather bag. A ball of this compoſition, between the circumference of a ſhilling and half-a-crown, about the ſize of a billiard-ball, keeps them, they ſay, in ſtrength and ſpirits during a whole day's fatigue, better than a loaf of bread, or a meal of meat. Its name in Arabia and Abyſſinia is Bun, but I apprehend its true name is Caſſé, from Caſſa the ſouth province of Narea, whence it is firſt ſaid to have come; it is white in the bean. The coffee-tree is the wood of the country, produced ſpontaneouſly everywhere in great abundance, from Caſſa to the banks of the Nile.

Thus much for this remarkable nation, whoſe language is perfectly different from any in Abyſſinia, and is the ſame throughout all the tribes, with very little variation of dialect. This is a nation that has conquered ſome of the fineſt provinces of Abyſſinia, and of whoſe inroads we ſhall hereafter have occaſion to ſpeak continually; and it is very difficult to ſay how far they might not have accompliſhed the conqueſt of the whole, had not providence interpoſed in a manner little expected, but more efficacious than a thouſand armies, and all the inventions of man.

THE Galla, before their inroads into Abyssinia, had never in their own country seen or heard of the small-pox. This disease met them in the Abyssinian villages. It raged among them with such violence, that whole provinces conquered by them became half-desert; and, in many places, they were forced to become tributary to those whom before they kept in continual fear. But this did not happen till the reign of Yafous the Great, at the beginning of the present century, where we shall take fresh notice of it, and now proceed with what remains of the reign of Sertza Denghel, whom we left with his army in the 9th year of his reign, residing at Dobit, a small town in Dembea, watching the motion of the rebels, Isaac Baharnagash, and others, his confederates.

THE tenth year of his reign, as soon as the weather permitted him, the king went into Gojam to oppose the inroads of the Djawi, a clan of the western or Boren Galla, who then were in possession of the Buco, or royal dignity, among the seven nations. But they had repassed the Nile upon the first news of the king's march, without having time to waste the country. The king then went to winter in Bizamo, which is south of the Nile, the native country of these Galla, the Djawi.

IF this nation, the Galla, has deserved ill of the Abyssinians by the frequent inroads made into their country, they must, however, confess one obligation, that in the end they entirely ruined their ancient enemy, the Mahometan king of Adel, and reduced him to a state of perfect insignificance.

SERTZA DENGHEL then returned with his army into Dembea, where, finding the militia of that province much disaffected by communication with the Moorish soldiers settled among them from Gagnè's time to this day, and that most of them had in their hearts forsaken the Christian religion, and were all ready to fail in their allegiance, he assembled the greatest part of them without their arms, and, surrounding them with his soldiers, cut them to pieces, to the number of 3000 men.

IN the 13th year of his reign, Mahomet king of Adel marched out of his own country with the view of joining the Bascha and Baharnagash. But the king, ever watchful over the motions of his enemies, surprised the Baharnagash before his junction either with Mahomet or the bascha, and defeated or dispersed his army, obliging him to fly in disguise, with the utmost danger of being taken prisoner, to hide himself with the bascha at Dobarwa. He then appointed Darguta, governor of Tigré, an old and experienced officer, giving him the charge of the province, and to watch the bascha; and, leaving with him his wounded, (and in their place taking some fresh soldiers from Darguta) he, by forced marches, endeavoured to meet Mahomet, who had not heard of his victory over Isaac; and being informed that the king of Adel was encamped on the hither side of the river Wali, having passed it to join Isaac, the king, by a sudden movement, crossed the river, and came opposite to Mahomet's quarters, who was then striking his tents, having just heard of the fate of the Baharnagash. Mahomet and his whole army were struck with a panic at this unexpected appearance of the king on the opposite side of the river, which had cut off his retreat to Adel. Fearing, however,

however, there might still be an enemy behind him, and that he should be hemmed in between both, he resolved to pass, but did it in so tumultuous a manner that the king's army had no trouble but to slaughter those who arrived at the opposite bank. Great part of the cavalry, seeing the fate of their companions at the ford, attempted to pass above and below by swimming: but, though the river was deep and smooth, the banks were high, and many were drowned, not being able to scramble up on the other side. Many were also destroyed by stones, and the lances of Sertza Denghel's men, from the banks above; some passed, however, joining Mahomet, and leaving the rest of the army to attempt a passage at the ford, crossed with the utmost speed lower down the river without being pursued, and carried the news of their own defeat to Adel.

THE whole Moorish army perished this day except the horse, either by the sword or in the river; nor had the Moors received so severe a blow since the defeat of Gragné by Claudius. The king then decamped, and took post at Zarroder, on the frontiers of Adel, with a design to winter there and lay waste the country, into which he intended to march as soon as the fair weather returned. But it was the misfortune of this great prince, that his enemies were situated at the two most distant extremities of the kingdom. For the Galla attacked Gojam on the west, at the very time he prepared to enter Adel on the east. Without loss of time, however, he traversed the whole kingdom of Abyssinia, and came up with the Boren Galla upon the river Madge, but no action of consequence followed. The Galla, attempting the king's camp in the night, and finding themselves too weak to carry it, retreated immediately into their own country.

While

While returning to Dembea, he met a party of the Falasha, called Abari, at Wainadega, and entirely destroyed them, so that not one escaped.

THE king was now so formidable that no army of the enemy dared to face him, and he obliged the Falasha to give up their king Radaet, whom he banished to Wadge; and the four following years he spent in ravaging the country, of his enemies the Galla, in Shat and Bed, and that of the Falasha in Samen and Serkè, where he beat Caliph king of the Falasha, who had succeeded Radaet.

THE Galla, in advancing towards Gojam and Damot, had over-run the whole low country between the mountains of Narea and the Nile. The king, desirous to open a communication with a country where there was a great trade, especially for gold, crossed the Nile in his way to that province, the Galla flying everywhere before him. He was received with very great joy by the prince of that country, who looked upon him as his deliverer from those cruel enemies. Here he received many rich presents; more particularly a large quantity of gold, and he wintered at Cutheny in that province, where Abba Hedar his brother died, having been blown up with gun-powder, with his wife and children. The Nareans desired, this year, to be admitted to the Christian faith; and they were converted and baptised by a mission of priests sent by the king for that purpose.

At the time he was rescuing the kingdom of Narea, Cadward Basha, a young officer of merit and reputation, lately come from Constantinople to Dawaro as basha of Masuah, had begun his command with making inroads into Tigrè,
and

and driving off a number of the inhabitants into slavery. The king, necessarily engaged at a distance, suffered these injuries with a degree of impatience ; and, after having provided for the security of the several countries immediately near him, he marched with his army directly for Woggora, committing every degree of excess in his march, in order to provoke the Falasha to descend from their heights and offer him battle.

A FRUGAL æconomical people, such as the Jews are, could not bear to see their cattle and crops destroyed in so wanton a manner before their very faces. They came, therefore, down in immense numbers to attack the king, one of the most excellent generals Abyssinia ever had, at the head of a small, but veteran army. Geshen, brother of the famous Gideon, was then king of the Jews, and commanded the army of his countrymen. The battle was fought on the plain of Woggora on the 19th of January 1594, with the success that was to be expected. Four thousand of the Jewish army were slain upon the spot ; and, among them, Geshen, their unfortunate king and leader.

AFTER this victory, Sertza Denghel marched his army into Kuara, through the country where the Jews had many strong-holds, and received everywhere their submission. Then turning to the left, he came through the country of the Shangalla, called Woombarea, and so to that of the Agows. There he heard that new troubles were meditating in Damot ; but the inhabitants of that province were not yet ripe enough to break out into open rebellion.

THAT he might not, therefore, have two enemies at such a distance from each other upon his hands at once, this year, as soon as the rains were over, he determined to march and attack the basha. The basha was very soon informed of his designs, and as soon prepared to meet them; so that the king found him already in the field, encamped on his own side of the Mareb, but without having committed, till then, any act of hostility. He marched out of his camp, and formed, upon seeing the royal army approach; leaving a sufficient field for the king to draw up in, if he should incline to cross the river, and attack him.

THIS confident, rather than prudent conduct of the basha, did not intimidate the king, who being used to improve every advantage coolly, and without bravado, embraced this very opportunity his enemy chose to give him. He formed, therefore, on his own side of the Mareb, and passed it in as good order as possible, considering it is a swift stream, and very deep at that season of the year. He halted several times while his men were in the water, to put them again in order, as if he had expected to be attacked the moment he landed on the other side. The basha, a man of knowledge in his profession, who saw this cautious conduct of the king, is said to have cried out, "How unlike he is to what I have heard of his father!" alluding to the general rash behaviour of the late king Menas whilst at the head of his army.

SERTZA DENGHEL having left all his baggage on the other side, and passed the river, drew up his army in the same deliberate manner in which he had crossed the Mareb, and formed opposite to the basha; as if he had been acting under

der him, and by his orders, availing himself with great attention of all the advantages the ground could afford him. The basha, confident in the superior valour of his troops, thought, now he had got the king between him and the river, that he would easily that day finish Sertza Denghel's life and reign.

THE battle began with the most determined resolution and vigour on both sides. The Abyssinian foot drove back the Turkish infantry ; and the king, dismounting from his horse, with his lance and shield in his hand, and charging at their head, animated them to preserve that advantage. On the other hand, the basha, who had soon put to flight part of the Abyssinian horse with whom he had engaged, fell furiously upon the foot commanded by the king, the Turks making a great carnage among them with their sabres, and the affair became but doubtful, when Robel, gentleman of the bed-chamber to the king, who commanded the pike-men on horseback, part of the king's household troops, seeing his master's danger, charged the Turkish horse where he saw the basha in person, and, clearing his way, broke his pike upon an officer of the basha who carried the standard immediately before him, and threw him dead at his feet. Being without other arms, he then drew the short crooked knife which the Abyssinians always carry in their girdle, and, pushing up his horse close before the basha could recover from his surprise, he plunged it in his throat, so that he expired instantly. So unlooked-for a spectacle struck a panic into the troops. The Turkish horse first turned their backs, and a general route followed.

THE *bas*ha's body was carried upon a mule out of the field, and struck a terror into all the Mahometans wherever it passed. It no sooner entered Dobarwa than it was obliged to be carried out at the other end of the town. Sertza Denghel was not one that flumbered upon a victory. He entered Dobarwa sword in hand, putting all the Pagans and Mahometans that fell in his way to death, and, in this manner, pursued them to the frontiers of Masuah, leaving many to die for want of water in that desert.

THE king, in honour of this brave action performed by Robel, ordered what follows to be writ in letters of gold, and inserted in the records of the kingdom: "Robel, servant to Sertza Denghel, and son to Menetcheli, slew a Turkish *bas*ha on horseback with a common knife."

SERTZA DENGHEL, having thus delivered himself from the most formidable of his enemies, marched through Gojam again into Narea, extirpating, all the way he went, the Galla that obstructed his way to that state. He left an additional number of priests and monks to instruct them in the Christian religion; though there are some historians of this reign who pretend that it was not till this second visit that Narea was converted.

HOWEVER this may be, victory had everywhere attended his steps, and he was now preparing to chastise the malcontents at Damot, when he was accosted by a priest, famous for his holiness and talent for divination, who warned him not to undertake that war. But the king, expressing his contempt of both the message and messenger, declared his fixed resolution to invade Damot without delay.

The

The priest is said to have limited his advice still further, and to have only begged him to remember not to eat the fish of a certain river in the territory of Giba in the province of Shat. The king, however, flushed with his victory over the Boren Galla, forgot the name of the river and the injunction; and, having ate fish out of this river, was immediately after taken dangerously ill, and died on his return.

THE writer of his life says, that the fatal effects of this river were afterwards experienced in the reign of Yafous the Great, at the time in which he wrote, when the king's whole army, encamped along the sides of this river, were taken with violent sickness after eating the fish caught in it, and that many of the soldiers died. Whether this be really fact or not, I will not take upon me to decide. Whether fish, or any other animal, living in water impregnated with poisonous minerals, can preserve its own life, and yet imbibe a quantity of poison sufficient to destroy the men that should eat it, seems to me very doubtful. Something like this is said to happen in oysters, which are found on copperas beds, or have preparations of copperas thrown upon them to tinge a part of them with green. I do not, however, think it likely, that the creature would live after this metallic dose, or preserve a taste that would make it food for man till he accumulated a quantity sufficient to destroy him.

SERTZA DENGHEL was of a very humane affable disposition, very different from his father Menas. He was steadfast in his adherence to the church of Alexandria, and seemed perfectly indifferent as to the Romish church and clergy. In conversation, he frequently condemned their tenets, but always commended the sobriety and sanctity of their lives.

He left no legitimate sons, but many daughters by his wife Mariam Serra ; and two natural sons, Za Mariam and Jacob. He had also a nephew called *Za Denghel*, son of his brother Lefana Christos.

It is absolutely contrary to truth, what is said by Tellez and others, that the illegitimate sons have no right to succeed to the crown. There is, indeed, no sort of difference, as may be seen by many examples in the course of this history.

SERTZA DENGHEL at first seemed to have intended his nephew, Za Denghel, to succeed him, a prince who had every good quality ; was arrived at an age fit for governing, and had attended him and distinguished himself in great part of his wars. But, being upon his death-bed, he changed his mind, probably at the instigation of the queen and the ambitious nobles, who desired to have the government in their own hands during a long minority. His son Jacob, a boy of seven years old, was now brought into court, and treated as heir-apparent, which everybody thought was but natural and pardonable from the affection of a father.

At last when he found that he was sick to death, the interest and love of his country seemed to overcome even the ties of blood ; so that, calling his council together around his bed, he designed his successor in this last speech : ‘ As I am sensible I am at the point of death, next to the care of my soul, I am anxious for the welfare of my kingdom. My first idea was to appoint Jacob my son to be successor ; and I had done so unless for his youth, and it is probable neither you nor I could have cause to repent it. Considering, however,

‘however, the state of my kingdom, I prefer its interest to
‘the private affection I bear my son ; and do, therefore, here-
‘by appoint Za Denghel my nephew to succeed me, and be
‘your king ; and recommend him to you as fit for war, ripe
‘in years, exemplary in the practice of every virtue, and
‘as deserving of the crown by his good qualities, as he is by
‘his near relation to the royal family.’ And with these words
the king expired in the end of August 1595, and was buried
in the island Roma.

As soon as Sertza Denghel died, the nobility resumed
their former resolutions. The very reasons the dying king
had given them, why Za Denghel was fitted to reign, were
those for the which they were determined to reject him ; as
they, after so long a reign as the last, were perfectly weary
at being kept in their duty, and desired nothing more than
an infant king and a long minority : this they found in
Jacob.





Z A D E N G H E L.

From 1595 to 1604.

Za Denghel dethroned—Jacob a Minor succeeds—Za Denghel is restored—Banishes Jacob to Narea—Converted to the Romilb Religion—Battle of Bartcho, and Death of the King.

SERTZA DENGHEL had several daughters, one of whom was married to Kefla Wahad, governor of the province of Tigrè, and another to Athanasius, governor of Amhara. These two were the most powerful men then in the kingdom. The empress and her two sons-in-law saw plainly, that the succession of Za Denghel, a man of ripe years, possessed of every requisite for reigning, was to exclude them from any share in government but a subaltern one, for which they were to stand candidates upon their own merits, in common with the rest of the nobility.

ACCORDINGLY, no sooner was Sertza Denghel dead, perhaps some time before, but a conspiracy was formed to change the order of succession, and this was immediately executed by order of this triumvirate, who sent a body of soldiers and seized Za Denghel, and carried him close prisoner to

Dek, a large island in the lake Tzana, belonging to the queen, where he was kept for some time, till he escaped and hid himself in the wild inaccessible mountains of Gojam, which there form the banks of the Nile. They carried their precautions still further; and subsequent events after shewed, that these were well-grounded. They sent a party of men at the same time to surprise Socinios, but he, sufficiently upon his guard, no sooner saw the fate of his cousin, Za Denghel, than he withdrew himself, but in such a manner that shewed plainly he knew the value of his own pretensions, and was not to be an unconcerned spectator if a revolution was to happen.

IN order to understand perfectly the claims of those princes, who were by turns placed on the throne in the bloody war that followed, it will be necessary to know that the emperor David III. had three sons: The eldest was Claudius, who succeeded him in the empire; the history of whose reign we have already given: The second was Jacob, who died a minor before his brother, but left two sons, Tascar and Facilidas: The third son was Menas, called Adamas Segued, who succeeded Claudius his brother in the empire; whose reign we have likewise given in its proper place.

MENAS had four sons; Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, who succeeded his father in the empire, and whose history we have just now finished; the second Aquicter; the third Abatè; and the fourth, Lefana Christos; whose son was that Za Denghel of whom we were last speaking, appointed to succeed to the throne by his uncle Sertza Denghel, when on his death-bed.

TASCAR, the son of Jacob, died a minor; he rebelled against his uncle Menas, in confederacy with the Baharnagash, as we have already seen; and his army being beat by his uncle and sovereign, he was, by his order, thrown over the steep precipice of Lamalmon, and dashed to pieces. Facilidas, the second remaining son of the same minor Jacob, lived many years, possessed great estates in Gojam, and died afterwards in battle, fighting against the Galla, in defence of these possessions.

THIS Facilidas had a natural son named Socinios, who inherited his father's possessions; was nephew to Sertza Denghel, and cousin-german to Za Denghel appointed to succeed to the throne; so that Za Denghel being once removed, as Jacob had been postponed, there could be no doubt of Socinios's claim as the nearest heir-male to David III. commonly called Wanag Segued.

SOCINIOS, from his infancy, had been trained to arms, and had undergone a number of hardships in his uncle's wars. Part of his estate had been seized, after his father's death, by men in power, favourites of Sertza Denghel; and he hoped for a complete restitution of them from Za Denghel his cousin, when he should succeed, for these two were as much connected with each other by friendship and affection, as they were by blood. Nor would any step, says the historian, have ever been taken by Socinios towards mounting the throne, had Za Denghel his cousin succeeded, as by right he ought.

IN the mean time, he was at the head of a considerable band of foldiers ; had affifted Fafa Chriftos, governor of Gogjam, in defeating the Galla, who had over-run that province; and, by his courage and conduct that day, had left a strong impreffion upon the minds of the troops that he would foon become the moft capable and active foldier of his time.

THE queen and her two fons-in-law being difappointed in their attempt upon Socinios, were obliged to take the only ftep that remained in their choice, which was to appoint the infant Jacob * king, a child of feven years old, and put him under the tutelage of Ras Athanafius.

THE emprefs Mariam Sena, and her two fons-in-law, had gained to their party Za Selaffé, a perfon of low birth, native of an obfcure nation of Pagans, called Guraguè, a man efteemed for bravery and conduct, and beloved by the foldiers; but turbulent and feditious, without honour, gratitude, or regard, either to his word, to his fovereign, or the interefts of his country.

JACOB had fuffered patiently the direction of thofe that governed him, fo long as the excufe of his minority was a good one. But being now arrived at the age of 17, he began to put in, by degrees, for his fhare in the direction of affairs; and obferving fome fteps that tended to prolong the government of his tutors, by his own power he banifhed Za Selaffé, the author of them, into the diftant kingdom of Narea.

VOL. II.

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* The name of infant-king feems to have been given as a nick-name in Abyffinia, and is preferred to this day.

THIS vigorous proceeding alarmed the empress and her party. They saw that the measure taken by Jacob would presently lead all good men and lovers of their country to support him, and to annihilate their power. They resolved not to wait till this took place, but instantly to restore Za Denghel, whom, with great difficulty, they found hid in the mountains between Gojam and Damot. And, to remove every suspicion in Za Denghel's breast, Ras Athanasius repaired to the palace, giving Jacob publicly, even on the throne, the most abusive and scurrilous language, calling him an obstinate, stubborn, foolish boy; declaring him degraded from being king, and announcing to his face the coming of Za Denghel to supplant him. Jacob's behaviour on so unexpected an occasion was not such as Athanasius's rash speech led to expect. He gave a cool and mild reply to these invectives; but, finding himself entirely in his enemy's power, without losing a moment, he left his palace in the night, taking the road to Samen, not doubting of safety and protection if he could reach his mother's relations among those high, rocky mountains.

FORTUNE at first seemed to favour his endeavours. He arrived at a small village immediately in the neighbourhood of the country to which he was going; but there he was discovered and made prisoner; carried back and delivered to Za Denghel his rival, whom he found placed on his throne.

IN all these cases, it is the invariable, though barbarous practice of Abyssinia, to mutilate any such pretender to the throne, by cutting off his nose, ear, hand, or foot, as they shall be inclined the patient should die or live after the operation,

ation, it being an established law, that no person can succeed to the throne, as to the priesthood, without being perfect in all his limbs. Za Denghel, as he could not adopt so inhuman a procedure even with a rival, contented himself with only banishing Jacob to Narea.

EVER since that period of Menas's reign, when Samur, basha of Masuah, had been put in possession of Dobarwa in virtue of a treaty with Isaac Baharnagash, then in rebellion, the Catholic religion was left destitute of all support, the fathers that had remained in Abyssinia being dead, and the entry into that kingdom shut up by the violent animosity of the Turks, and the cruelties they exercised upon all missionaries that fell into their hands. The few Catholics that remained were absolutely deprived of all assistance, when Melchior Sylvanus, an Indian vicar of the church of St Anne at Goa, was pitched upon as a proper person to be sent to their relief. His language, colour, eastern air and manners, seemed to promise that he would succeed, and baffle the vigilance of the Turks.

HE arrived at Masuah in 1597, and entered Abyssinia unsuspected; but the power of the Turk being much lessened by the great defeat given them by Sertza Denghel, who slew Cadward Basha, and retook Dobarwa and all its dependencies, as has been already mentioned, a very considerable part of their former dangers, the missionaries might now hope to escape. But there still remained others obstructing the communication with India, which, however, were surmountable, and gave way, as most of the kind do, to prudence, courage, and perseverance.

ACCORDINGLY, in the year 1600, Peter Paez, the most capable, as well as most successful missionary that ever entered Ethiopia, arrived at Masuah, after having suffered a long imprisonment, and many other hardships, on his way to that island; and, taking upon him the charge of the Portuguese, relieved Melchior Sylvanus, who returned to India.

PAEZ, however, did not press on to court as his predecessors, and even his successors constantly did, but, confining himself to the convent of Fremona in Tigré, he first set himself by an invincible application to attain the knowledge of the Geez written language, in which he arrived to a degree of knowledge superior to that of the natives themselves. He then applied to the instruction of youth, keeping a school, where he taught equally the children of the Portuguese, and those of the Abyssinians. The great progress made by the scholars speedily spread abroad the reputation of the master. First of all, John Gabriel, one of the most distinguished officers of the Portuguese, spoke of him in the warmest terms of commendation to Jacob, then upon the throne, who sent to Paez, and ordered his attendance as soon as the rainy season should be over.

IN the month of April 1604, Peter, attended only by two of his young disciples, presented himself to the king, who then held his court at Dancaz, where he was received with the same honours as are bestowed upon men of the first rank, to the great discontent of the Abyssinian monks, who easily foresaw that their humiliation would certainly follow this exaltation of Petros; nor were they mistaken. In a dispute held before the king next day, Peter produced the two boys, as more than sufficient to silence all the theologians in

in Abyssinia. Nor can it ever be doubted, by any who know the ignorance of these brutish priests, but that the victory, in these scholastic disputes, would be fairly, easily, and completely on the side of the children.

MASS was then said according to the usage of the church of Rome, which was followed by a sermon (among the first ever preached in Abyssinia,) but so far surpassing, in elegance and purity of diction, any thing yet extant in the learned language, Geez, that all the hearers began to look upon this as the first miracle on the part of the preacher.

ZA DENGHEL was so taken with it, that, from that instant, he not only resolved to embrace the Catholic religion, but declared this his resolution to several friends, and soon after to Paez himself, under an oath of secrecy that he should conceal it for a time. This oath, prudently exacted from Peter, was as imprudently rendered useless by the zeal of the king himself, who being of too sanguine a disposition to temporize after he was convinced, published a proclamation, forbidding the religious observation of Saturday, or the Jewish sabbath, for ever after. He likewise ordered letters to be wrote to the pope Clement VIII. and to Philip III. king of Spain and Portugal, wherein he offered them his friendship, whilst he requested mechanics to assist, and Jesuits to instruct his people.

THESE sudden and violent measures were presently known; and every wretch that had, from other causes, the seeds of rebellion sown in his heart, began now to pretend they were only nourished there by a love and attachment to the true religion.

MANY of the courtiers followed the king's example ; some as courtiers for the sake of the king's favour, and meaning to adhere to the religion of Rome no longer than it was a fashion at court, promoted their interest, and exposed them to no danger ; others, from their firm attachment to the king, the resolution to support him as their rightful sovereign, and a confidence in his superior judgment, and that he best knew what was most for the kingdom's advantage in its present distracted state, and for the confirmation of his own power, so intimately connected with the welfare of his people. Few, very few it is believed, adopted the Catholic faith, from that one discourse only, however pure the language, however eloquent the preacher. A hundred years and more had passed without convincing the Abyssinians in general, or without any material proof that they were prepared to be so.

HOWEVER, the Jesuits have quoted an instance of this instantaneous conversion by the sermon, which, for their credit, I will not omit, though no notice is taken of it in the annals of those times, where it is not indeed to be expected, nor do I mean that it is less credible on this account.

AN Abyssinian monk, of very advanced years, came forward to Peter Paez, and said in a loud voice before the king, " Although I have lived to a very great age, without a doubt of the Alexandrian faith, I bless God that he has spared me to this day, and thereby given me an opportunity of choosing a better. The things we knew before, you have so well explained, that they become still more intelligible ; and we are thereby confirmed in our belief. Those things that were difficult, and which we could hardly understand, you
have

Have made so clear, that we now wonder at our own blindness in not having seen them plainly before. For these benefits which I now confess to have received, I here make my declaration, that it is my steadfast purpose, with the assistance of Almighty God, to live and die in the faith you profess, and have now preached."

AMONG those of the court most attached to the king was Laeca Mariam, the inseparable companion of his good and bad fortune, who had followed his master from principles of duty and affection, without designing to throw away a consideration upon what were likely to be the consequences to himself. He was reputed, in his character and abilities as a soldier, to be equal to Za Sclaffé, but a very different man, compared to him in his qualities of civil life; for he was sober in his general behaviour, sparing in discourse, and much more ready to do a good office than to promise one; very affable and courteous in his manner, and of so humble and unassuming a deportment, that it was thought impossible to be real in a man, who had so often proved his superiority over others upon trial.

THIS man, a true royalist, was one of those that embraced the Catholic religion that day, probably following the example of the king; and this, in the hands of wicked men, their enemies, became very soon a pretence for the murder of both; for Za Sclaffé, impatient of a rival in any thing, more especially in military knowledge, began to hold seditious assemblies, and especially with the monks, whom he taught to believe what the king's conduct daily confirmed, that the Alexandrian faith was totally reprobated, and no religion.

religion would be tolerated but that of the church of Rome.

GOJAM, a province always inveterate against any thing that bore the smallest inclination to the church of Rome, declared against the king; and, before he went to join his associates, the traitor, Za Selassé, in a conference he had with the Abuna Petros, proposed to him to absolve Za Denghel's subjects and soldiers from their oaths of allegiance to their sovereign. The Abuna, a man of very corrupt and bad life, very hearty in the cause, and an enemy to the king, was staggered at this proposal; not that he was averse to it, because it might do mischief, but because he doubted whether any such effect would follow it as Za Selassé expected; and he, therefore, asked what good he expected from such a novelty? when this traitor assured him, that it would be most efficacious for that very reason, because it was then first introduced: the Abuna forthwith absolved the soldiers and subjects of Za Denghel from their allegiance, declaring the king excommunicated and accursed, together with all those that should support him, or favour his cause.

I must here observe, that, though we are now writing the history of the 17th century, this was the first example of any priest excommunicating his sovereign in Abyssinia, except that of Honorius, who excommunicated Amda Sion for the repeated commission of incest. And the doubt the zealot Abuna Petros had of its effect as being a novelty, which fact the Jesuits themselves attest, shews it was a practice that had not its origin in the church of Alexandria. Neither had these curses of the Abuna any visible effect, till Za Selassé had put himself at the head of an army raised in Gojam.

The king was prepared to meet him, and ready to march from Dancaz.

ZA DENGHEL immediately marched out into the plain of Bartcho, and in the way was deserted, first by Ras Athanasius, then by many of his troops; and, by this great desertion in his army, found the first effects of the Abuna's curses, inasmuch, that John Gabriel, a Portuguese officer of the first distinction, advised the king to retire in time, and avoid a battle, by flying to strong-holds for a season, till the present delusion among his subjects should cease. But the king, thinking himself dishonoured by avoiding the defiance of a rebel, resolved upon giving Za Selassè battle, who, being an able general, knew well the danger he would incur by delay.

It was October 13th 1704 that the king, after drawing up his army in order of battle, placing 200 Portuguese, with a number of Abyssinian troops, on the right, took to himself the charge of the left, and called for Peter Paez to give him absolution; but that Jesuit was occupied at a convenient distance in Tigré, by his exorcisms destroying ants, butterflies, mice, locusts, and various other enemies, of much more importance, in his opinion, than the life of a king who had been blindly, but directly conducted to slaughter by his fanatical preachings.

The battle began with great appearance of success. On the right, the Portuguese, led by old and veteran officers, destroyed and overturned every thing before them with their fire-arms: but on the left, where the king commanded, things went otherwise, for the whole of this division

fled, excepting a body of nobility, his own officers and companions, who remained with him, and fought manfully in his defence. Above all, the king himself, trained to a degree of excellence in the use of arms, strong and agile in body, in the flower of his age, and an excellent horseman, performed feats of valour that seemed above the power of man: but he and his attendants being furrounded by the whole army of Za Selaffé, and decreasing in number, were unable to support any longer such disadvantage.

LAECA MARIAM, solicitous only for the king's safety, charging furiously every one that approached, was thrust through with a lance by a common soldier who had approached him unobserved. The king, desirous only to avenge his death, threw himself like lightning into the opposite squadron, and received a stroke with a lance in his breast, which threw him from his horse on the ground. Grievous as the wound was, he instantly recovered himself, and, drawing his sword, continued to fight with as much vigour as ever. He was now hemmed in by a ring of soldiers, part of whom, afraid of encountering him, remained at a distance, throwing missile weapons without good direction or strength, as if they had been hunting some fierce wild beast. Others, wishing to take him prisoner, abstained from striking him, out of regard to his character and dignity; but the traitor, Za Selaffé, coming up at that instant, and seeing the king almost fainting with fatigue, and covered with wounds, pointed his lance, and, spurring his horse, furiously struck him in the middle of the forehead, which blow threw the king senseless to the ground, where he was afterwards slain with many wounds.

THE battle ended with the death of Za Denghel; many saw him fall, and more his body after the defeat; but no one chose to be the first that should in any way dispose of it, or care to own that they knew it. It lay in this abject state for three days, till it was buried by three peasants in a corner of the plain, in a little building like a chapel (which I have seen) not above six feet high, under the shade of a very fine tree, in Abyssinia called *saffa*: there it lay till ten years after, when Socinios removed it from that humble mausoleum, and buried it in a monastery called Daga, in the lake Dembea, with great pomp and magnificence.

THE grief which the death of Za Denghel occasioned was so universal, and the odium it brought upon the authors of it so great, that neither Za Selassé nor Ras Athanasius dared for a time take one step towards naming a successor, which the fear of Za Denghel, and the uncertainty of victory, had prevented them from doing by common consent before the battle. There was no doubt but that the election would fall upon Jacob, but he was far off, confined in the mountainous country of Caffa in Narca. The distance was great; the particular place uncertain; the way to it lay through deserts, always dangerous on account of the Galla, and often impassable.



J A C O B.

From 1604 to 1605.

Makes Proposals to Socinios, which are rejected—Takes the Field—Bad Conduct and Defeat of Za Selaffé—Battle of Debra Zeit—Jacob defeated and slain.

DURING the interim, Socinios appeared in Amhara, not as one offering himself as a candidate to be supported by the strength and interest of others, but like a conqueror at the head of a small but well-disciplined army of veteran troops, ready to compel by force those who should refuse to swear allegiance to him from conviction of his right.

THE first step he took was to send Bela Christos, a nobleman of known worth, to Ras Athanasius then in Gojam, stating to him his pretensions to succeed Za Denghel in the kingdom, desiring his assistance with his army, and declaring that he would acknowledge the service done him as soon as it was in his power. Without waiting for an answer, at the head of his little army he passed the Nile, and entered Gojam. He then sent a second message to Ras Athanasius, acquainting him that he was at hand, and ordering him to prepare to receive him as his sovereign.

THIS abrupt and confident conduct of Socinios very much disconcerted Ras Athanasius. He had as yet concerted nothing with his friend Za Selassé, and it was now late to do it. There was no person then within the bounds of the empire that solicited the crown but Socinios, and he was now at hand, and very much favoured by the soldiers. For these reasons, he thought it best to put a good face upon the matter in his present situation. He, therefore, met Socinios as required, and joined his army, as if it had been his free choice, and saluted him king in the midst of repeated cheerful congratulations of both armies now united.

HAVING succeeded in this to his wish, Socinios lost no time to try the same experiment with Za Selassé, who was then in Dembea, the province of which he was governor. To him he sent this message, "That God by his grace having called him to the throne of his ancestors, he was now on his march to Dembea, where he requested him to prepare his troops to receive him, and dispose them to deserve the favours that he was ready to confer upon all of them." Za Selassé remained for a while as if thunder-struck by so peremptory an intimation. Of all masters he most wished for Jacob, because, from experience, he thought he could govern him. Of all masters he most feared Socinios, because he knew he possessed capacity and qualities that would naturally determine him to govern alone. After having concerted with his friends, he sent Socinios answer, "That not having till now known any thing of his claims or intentions, he had sent an invitation to Jacob into Narea, whose answer he expected; but that, in case Jacob did not appear, he then would receive Socinios with every mark of duty and affection, and hoped he would grant him the

short delay to which he had inadvertently, though innocently, engaged himself."

THIS answer did in no shape please Socinios, who dispatched the messenger immediately with this declaration, "That he was already king, and would never cede his right to Jacob, who was deposed and judged unworthy to reign; no nor even to his father Melec Segued, though he should rise again from the grave, and claim the throne he had so long sat upon."

ZA SELASSE, easily penetrating that there was no peace in Socinios's intentions, first imprisoned the messenger, and, instead of another answer, marched instantly with his whole army to surprise him before he had time to take his measures. And in this he succeeded. For Socinios being at that instant overtaken by sickness, and not knowing what trust to put in Athanasius's army, retired in haste to the mountains of Amhara; while Athanasius also withdrew his troops till he should know upon what terms he stood both with Za Selassé and the king.

STILL no return came from Jacob. The winter was nearly past, and not only the soldiers, but people of all ranks began to be weary of this interregnum, and heartily wished for their ancient form of government. They said, That since Jacob did not appear, there could be no reason for excluding Socinios, whose title was undoubted, and who had all the qualities necessary to make a good king.

ZA SELASSE seeing this opinion gained ground among his troops, and fearing they might mutiny and leave him alone,

made a virtue of necessity: he dispatched an ambaffador to acknowledge Socinios as his fovereign, and declare that he was ready to fwear allegiance to him. Socinios received this embaffy with great apparent complacency. He fent in return a monk, in whom he confided, a perfon of great worth and dignity, to be his representative, and receive the homage of Za Selaffé and his army. On the news of this monk's approach, Za Selaffé fent on his part ten men, the moft respectable in his camp, to meet this representative of the king, and conduct him into the camp, where Za Saleffé, and all his troops, did homage, and fware allegiance to Socinios. Feafts and presents were now given in the camp, as is ufual at the acceffion of a new king to the throne, and all the army abandoned themfelves to joy.

THESE good tidings were immediately communicated both to Socinios and Ras Athanafius. But, in the midft of this rejoicing, a meffenger came from Jacob, informing Za Selaffé that he was then in Dembea; that he had conferred upon him the title of Ras and Betwudet, that is, had made him the king's lieutenant-general throughout the whole empire. Za Selaffé, in poffeffion of the height of his wifhes, and making an ample diftribution among his troops, determined immediately to march and join Jacob in Dembea; but firft he wrote privately to the ten men that had accompanied the monk to Socinios, that they fhould withdraw themfelves as fuddenly and privately as poffible before the coming of Jacob was known. Eight of thefe were lucky enough to do fo; two of them were overtaken in the flight and brought back to Socinios, who ordered them to immediate execution.

RAS ATHANASIUS, seeing the prosperous turn that Jacob's affairs had taken, renounced his oath to Socinios, and repaired to Jacob at Coga, while Socinios retired into Amhara at the head of a very respectable army, waiting an opportunity to repay Jacob for his ambition, and Athanasius and Za Selassé for their treason and perjury towards him.

ALTHOUGH Jacob was now again seated on the throne, surrounded by the army and great officers of the empire, his mind was always disturbed with the apprehension of Socinios. In order to free himself from this anxiety, he employed Socinios's mother in an application to her son, with an offer of peace and friendship; promising, besides, that he would give him in property the kingdoms of Amhara, Walaka, and Shoa, and all the lands which his father had ever possessed in any other part of Abyssinia. Socinios shortly answered, "That what God had given him, no man could take from him; that the whole kingdom belonged to him, nor would he ever relinquish any part of it but with his life. He advised Jacob to consider this, and peaceably resign a crown which did not belong to him; and the attempting to keep which, would involve him and his country in a speedy destruction."

UPON this defiance, seeing Socinios implacable, Jacob took the field, and was followed by Za Selassé. But this proud and insolent traitor, who never could confine himself within the line of his duty, even under a king of his own choosing, would not join his forces with Jacob, but vain-gloriously led a separate army, subject to his orders alone. In this manner, having separate camps, choosing different ground, and sometimes at a considerable distance from each other, they

they came up with Socinios in Begemder. Jacob advanced so near him that his tent could be distinctly seen from that of Socinios, and, on the morrow, Jacob and Za Selassé, drawing up their armies, offered Socinios battle.

THAT wise prince saw too well that he was overmatched ; and, though he desired a battle as much as Jacob, it was not upon such terms as the present. He declined it, and kept hovering about them as near as possible on the heights and uneven ground, where he could not be forced to fight till it perfectly suited his own interest.

THIS refusal on the part of Socinios did but increase Za Selassé's pride. He despised Jacob as a general, and thought that Socinios declining battle was owing only to the apprehension he had of his presence, courage, and abilities. He continued parading with the separate army, perfectly intoxicated with confidence and an imaginary superiority, neglecting all the wholesome rules of war rigidly adhered to by great generals for the sake of discipline, however distant they may be from their enemy.

It was not long before this was told Socinios, who soon saw his advantage in it, and thereupon resolved to fight Za Selassé singly, and watch attentively till he should find him as far as possible from Jacob. Nor did he long wait for the occasion ; for Za Selassé, attempting to lead his army through very uneven and stony ground, called *the Pass of Mount Desfer*, and at a considerable distance from Jacob, Socinios attacked him while in the pass so rudely, that his army, entangled in broken and unknown ground, was surrounded and almost cut to pieces. Za Selassé, with a few followers,

saved themselves by the goodness of their horses, and joined the king, being the first messengers of their own defeat.

JACOB received the news of this misfortune without any apparent concern. On the contrary, he took Za Selassé roundly to task for having lost such an army by his misconduct; and from that time put on a coolness of carriage towards him that could not be bruiked by such a character. He made direct proposals to Socinios to join him, if he could be assured that his services would be well received. Socinios, though he reposed no confidence in one that had changed sides so often, was yet, for his own sake, desirous to deprive his rival of an officer of such credit and reputation with the soldiers. He therefore promised him a favourable reception; and, a treaty being concluded, Socinios marched into Gojam, followed by Jacob, and there was joined by Za Selassé whom Jacob had made governor of that province.

JACOB, not knowing how far this desertion might extend, and to shew Socinios the little value he set upon his new acquisition, immediately advanced towards him, and offered him battle. This was what Socinios very earnestly wished for; but, as his army was much inferior to Jacob's, he seemed to decline it from motives of fear, till he had found ground proper for his army to engage in with advantage.

JACOB, sensible of the great superiority he had, (historians say it was nearly thirty to one) grew every day more impatient to bring Socinios to an engagement, fearing he might retreat, and thereby prolong the war, which he had no doubt would be finished by the first action. Therefore he

was anxious to keep him always in fight, without regarding the ground through which his eagerness led him. Several days the two armies marched side by side in fight of each other, till they came to Debra Tzait, or the Mountain of Olives. There Jacob halted; he then advanced a little further, and seeing Socinios encamped, he did the same in a low and very disadvantageous post on the banks of the river Lebart.

Socinios having now obtained his desire, early in the morning of the 10th of March 1607 fell suddenly upon Jacob cooped up in a low and narrow place, which gave him no opportunity of availing himself of his numbers. Jacob soon found that he was over-reached by the superior generalship of his enemy. Socinios's troops were so strongly posted, that Jacob's soldiers found themselves in a number of ambushes they had not foreseen, so that, fighting or flying being equally dangerous to them, his whole army was nearly destroyed in the field, or in the flight, which was most ardently and vigorously followed till night, with little loss on the part of Socinios.

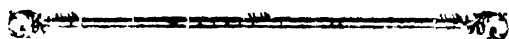
THIS battle, decisive enough by the route and dispersion of the enemy, became still more so from two circumstances attending it: The first was the death of his competitor, who fell unknown among a herd of common soldiers in the beginning of the action, without having performed, in his own person, any thing worthy of the character he had to sustain, or that could enable any spectator to give an account in what place he fell; the consequence of which was, that he was thought to be alive many years afterwards. The second was the death of the Abuna Petros. This priest

had distinguished himself in Za Denghel's reign, by absolving the king's subjects and soldiers from their oaths of allegiance, which was followed by the unfortunate death of Za Denghel in the plain of Bartcho. Vain of the importance he had acquired by the success of his treason, he had pursued the same conduct with regard to Socinios, and followed Jacob to battle, where, trusting to his character and habit for the safety of his person, he neglected the danger that he ran amidst a flying army. While occupied in uttering vain curses and excommunications against the conquerors, he was known, by the crucifix he held in his hand, by a Moorish soldier of Socinios, who thrust him through with a lance, then cut his head off, and carried it to the king.

THE Abyssinian annals state, that, immediately after seeing the head of Abuna Peter, Socinios ordered a retreat to be sounded, and that no more of his enemies should be slain. On the contrary, the Jesuits have said, that the pursuit was continued even after night; for that a body of horse, among whom were many Portuguese belonging to the army of Jacob, flying from Socinios's troops, fell over a very high precipice, it being so dark that they did not discover it; and that one soldier, called Manuel Gonzalez, finding his horse leave him, as it were flying, lighted luckily on a tree, where, in the utmost trepidation, he sat all night, not knowing where he was. This fear was greatly increased in the morning, when he beheld the horses, and the men who were his companions, lying dead and dashed to pieces in the plain below.

RAS ATHANASIOS, who had followed the party of Jacob, narrowly escaped by the swiftness of his horse, and hid himself in the monastery of Dima, at no great distance from
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the field of battle ; and Peter Paez, from remembrance of his former good offices, having recommended him to Sela Christos, Socinios's brother-in-law, he was pardoned ; but losing favour every day, his effects and lands having been taken from him on different occasions, he is said at last to have died for want, justly despised by all men for unsteadiness in allegiance to his sovereigns, by which he had been the occasion of the death of two excellent princes, had frequently endangered the life and state of the third, and had been the means of the slaughter of many thousands of their subjects, worthier men than himself, as they fell in the discharge of their duty. But before his death he had still this further mortification, that his wife, daughter of Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, voluntarily forsook his bed and retired to a single life.



SOCINIOS.



SOCINIOS, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1605 to 1632.

Socinius embraces the Romish Religion—War with Sennaar—With the Shepherds—Violent Conduct of the Romish Patriarch—Last rebels—Defeated at Wainadega—Socinius restores the Alexandrian Religion—Resigns his Crown to his eldest Son.

SOCINIOS, now universally acknowledged as king, began his reign with a degree of moderation which there was no reason to expect of him. Often as he had been betrayed, many and inveterate as his enemies were, now he had them in his power, he sought no vengeance for injuries which he had suffered, but freely pardoned every one, receiving all men graciously without reproach or reflections, or even depriving them of their employments.

BEING informed, however, that one Mahardin, a Moor, had been the first to break through that respect due to a king, by wounding Za Denghel at the battle of Bartcho, he ordered him to be brought at noon-day before the gate of his

his palace, and his head to be there struck off with an ax, as a just atonement for violated majesty.

THE king, now retired to Coga, gave his whole attention to regulate those abuses, and repair those losses, which this long and bloody war had occasioned. He had two brothers by the mother's side, men of great merit, Sela Christos, and Emana Christos, destined to share the principal part in the king's confidence and councils.

BELA CHRISTOS, a man of great family, who had been attached to him since he formed his first pretensions to the crown, was called to court to take his share in the glory and dangers of this reign, which it was easy to see would be a very active one; for every province around was full of rebels and independents, who had shaken off the yoke of government, paid no taxes, nor shewed other respect to the king than just what at the moment consisted with their own interest or inclination.

THE Portuguese soldiers, remnants of the army which came into Abyssinia under Christopher de Gama, had multiplied exceedingly, and their children had been trained by their parents in the use of fire-arms. They were at this time incorporated in one body under John Gabriel a veteran officer, who seems to have constantly remained with the king, while his soldiers (at least great part of them) had followed the fortune they thought most likely to prevail ever since the time of Claudius.

MENAS did not esteem them enough to keep them in his army at the expence of enduring the seditious conversations
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of their priests reviling and undervaluing his religion and government. He therefore banished them the kingdom ; but, instead of obeying, they joined the Baharnagash, then confederated with the Turks and in rebellion against his sovereign, as we have already mentioned. Sertza Denghel seems to have scarcely set any value upon them after this, and made very little use of them during his long reign. Upon the infant Jacob's being put upon the throne they all adhered to him ; and, after Jacob's banishment, part of them had attached themselves to Za Denghel, and behaved with great spirit in the battle of Bartcho.

UPON Jacob's restoration they had joined him, and with him were defeated at the decisive battle of Lebart, being all united against Socinios ; so that, on whatever side they declared themselves, they were constantly beaten by the cowardice of the Abyssinians with whom they were joined. Yet, tho' they had been so often on the side that was unfortunate, their particular losses had been always inconsiderable ; because, whatever was the fate of the rest of the army, none of the country troops would ever stand before them, and they made their retreat from amidst a routed army in nearly the same safety as if they had been conquerors ; because it was not, for several reasons, the interest of the conquerors to attack them, nor was the experiment ever likely to be an eligible one to the assailants.

SOCINIOS followed a conduct opposite to that of Menas. He determined to attach the Portuguese wholly to himself, and to make them depend upon him entirely. For this reason he made great advances to their priests, and sent for Peter Paez to court, where, after the usual disputes upon the

pope's supremacy, and the two natures in Christ, mass was said, and a sermon preached, much with the same success as it had been in the time of Za Denghel, and with full as great offence to the Abyssinian clergy.

THE province of Dembea, lying round the lake Tzana, is the most fertile and the most cultivated country in Abyssinia. It is entirely flat, and seems to have been produced by the decrease of water in the lake, which, from very visible marks, appears to have formerly been of four times the extent of what it is at present. Dembea, however fruitful, has one inconvenience to which all level countries in this climate are subject: A mortal fever rages in the whole extent of it, from March to Heder Michael, the eighth day of November, when there are always gentle showers. This dangerous fever stops immediately upon the falling of these rains, as suddenly as the plague does upon the first falling of the nuṣṭa, or dew, in Egypt.

ON the south side of this lake the country rises into a rocky promontory, which forms a peninsula and runs far into the lake. Nothing can be more beautiful than this small territory, elevated, but not to an inconvenient height, above the water which surrounds it on all sides, except the south. The climate is delightful, and no fevers or other diseases rage here. The prospect of the lake and distant mountains is magnificent beyond European conception, and Nature seems to have pointed this place out for pleasure, health, and retirement. Paez had asked and obtained this territory from the king, who, he says, gave him a grant of it in perpetuity. The manner of this he describes: "A civil officer is sent on the part of the king, who calls together

all the proprietors of the neighbouring lands, and visits the bounds with them; they kill a goat at particular distances, and bury the heads under ground upon the boundary line of this regality; which heads, Paez says, it is felony to dig up or remove; and this is a mark or gift of land in perpetuity."

WITHOUT contradicting the form of burying the goats heads, I shall only say, I never saw or heard of it, nor is there such a thing as a gift of land in *perpetuum* known in Abyssinia. All the land is the king's; he gives it to whom he pleases during pleasure, and resumes it when it is his will. As soon as he dies the whole land in the kingdom (that of the Abuna excepted) is in the disposal of the crown; and not only so, but, by the death of every present owner, his possessions, however long enjoyed, revert to the king, and do not fall to the eldest son. It is by proclamation the possession and property is reconveyed to the heir, who thereby becomes absolute master of the land for his own life or pleasure of the king, under obligation of military and other services; and that exception, on the part of the Abuna, is not in respect to the sanctity of his person, or charge, but because it is founded upon treaty*, and is become part of the constitution.

THE Abyssinians saw, with the utmost astonishment, the erection of a convent strongly built with stone and lime, of which before they had no knowledge, and their wonder was still increased, when, at desire of the king, Paez undertook

* We have mentioned this treaty in the reign of Icon Amlac.

took, of the same materials, to build a palace for him at the southmost end of this peninsula, which is called Gorgora. It was with amazement mixed with terror that they saw a house rise upon house, for so they call the different storeys.

PAEZ here displayed his whole ingenuity, and the extent of his abilities. He alone was architect, mason, smith, and carpenter, and with equal dexterity managed all the instruments used by each profession in the several stages of the work. The palace was what we shall call wainscoted with cedar, divided into state-rooms, and private apartments likewise for the queen and nobility of both sexes that formed the court, with accommodations and lodgings for guards and servants.

As the king had at that time a view to attack the rebels, the Agows and Damots, and to check the inroads of the Galla into Gojam, he saw with pleasure a work going on that provided the most commodious residence where his occupation in all probability was chiefly to lie. His principal aim was to bring into his kingdom a number of Portuguese troops, which, joined to those already there, and the converts he proposed to make after embracing the Catholic religion, might enable him to extirpate that rebellious spirit which seemed now universally to have taken possession of the hearts of his subjects, and especially of the clergy, of late taught, he did not seem to know how, that most dangerous privilege of cursing and excommunicating kings. He had not seen in Peter Paez and his fellow-priests any thing but submission, and a love of monarchy; their lives and manners were truly apostolical; and he never thought, till he came afterwards to be convinced upon proof, that

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the patriarch from Rome, and the Abuna from Cairo, tho' they differed in their opinion as to the two natures in Christ, did both heartily agree in the desire of erecting ecclesiastical dominion and tyranny upon the ruins of monarchy and civil power, and of effecting a total subordination of the civil government, either to the chairs of St Mark or St Peter.

IN the winter, during the cessation from work, Socinios called Paez from Gorgora to Coga, where he enlarged the territory the Jesuits then had at Fremona. After which he declared to him his resolution to embrace the Catholic religion; and, as Paez says, presented him with two letters, one to the king of Portugal, the other to the pope: the first dated the 10th of December 1607, the latter the 14th of October of the same year. These letters say not a word of his intended conversion, nor of submission to the see of Rome; but complain only of the disorderly state of his kingdom, and the constant inroads of the Galla, earnestly requesting a number of Portuguese soldiers to free them from their yoke, as formerly, under the conduct of Christopher de Gama, they had delivered Abyssinia from that of the Moors.

WHILE these things passed at Coga, two pieces of intelligence were brought to the king, both very material in themselves, but which affected him very differently. The first was, that the traitor Za Selaissé, while making one of his incursions into Gojam, had fallen into an ambush laid for him by the Toluma Galla, guardians of that province on the banks of the Nile, and that these Pagans had slain him and cut off his head, which they then presented to the

king, who ordered it to be exposed on the lance whereon it was fixed, in the most conspicuous place in the front of his palace.

THIS was the end of Ras Za Selassé, a name held in detestation to this day throughout all Abyssinia. Though his death was just such as it ought to have been, yet, as it was in an advanced time of life, he still became a hurtful example, by shewing that it was possible for a man to live to old age in the continual practice of murder and treason.

He was of low birth, as I have already observed, of a Pagan nation of Troglodytes, of the lowest esteem in Abyssinia, employed always in the meanest and most servile occupations, in which capacity he served first in a private family. Being observed to have an active, quick turn of mind, he was preferred to the service of Melec Segued, upon whose death he was so much esteemed by his son Jacob, for the expertness and capacity he shewed in business, that he gave him large possessions, and appointed him afterwards to several ranks in the army; having regularly advanced through the subordinate degrees of military command, always with great success, he was made at last general; and being now of importance sufficient to be able to ruin his benefactor, he joined Ras Athanasius, who had rebelled against Jacob, by whom he was taken prisoner, and, being mercifully dealt with, only banished to Narea. From this disgraceful situation he was freed by Za Denghel, who conferred upon him the most lucrative important employment in the state. In return, he rebelled against Za Denghel; and at Bartcho deprived him of his kingdom and life. Upon Jacob's accession he was appointed Betwudet, the first place.

place in Ethiopia, after the king, and governor of Gojam, one of the largest and richest provinces in Abyssinia. But he soon after again forsook Jacob, swore allegiance to Socinios, and joined him.

Not content with all this, he began to form some new designs while with the court at Coga; and, having said to some of the king's servants, over wine, that it was prophesied to him he should kill three kings, which he had verified in two, and was waiting for the third, this speech was repeated to Socinios, who ordered Za Selassè to be apprehended; and, though he most justly deserved death, the king mercifully commuted his punishment to banishment to the top of Oureé Amba, which signifies the Great Mountain upon the high ridge, called *Gufman*, near the banks of the Nile; and, though close confined in the caves on the top of that mountain, after a year's imprisonment he escaped to Walaka, and there declared himself captain of a band of robbers, with which he infested the province of Gojam, when he was slain by a peasant, and his head cut off and sent to Socinios, who very much rejoiced in the present, and disposed of it as we have mentioned.

THE second piece of intelligence the emperor received was that in the mountains of Habab, contiguous to Masuah, where is the famous monastery of the monks of St Eustathius, called *Bifan*; a person appeared calling himself Jacob, son of Sertza Denghel, and pretending to have escaped from the battle of Lebart; thus, taking advantage of the circumstance of Jacob's body not having been found in the field among the dead after that engagement, he pretended he had been so grievously wounded in the teeth and face that it was not

not possible to suffer the deformity to appear ; for which reason, as he said, but, as it appeared afterwards, to conceal the little resemblance he bore to Jacob, he wrapped about his head the corner of his upper cloth, and so concealed one side of his face entirely.

ALL Tigre hastened to join this impostor as their true sovereign ; who, finding himself now at the head of an army, came down from the mountains of Bisan, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Dobarwa upon the March, where he had a new accession of strength.

THE shape of the crown in Abyssinia is that of the hood, or capa, which the priests wear when saying mass. It is composed of silver, sometimes of gold, sometimes of both metals, mixed and lined with blue silk. It is made to cover part of the forehead, both cheeks, and the hind-part of the neck likewise to the joining of the shoulders. A crown of this shape could not but be of great service in hiding the terrible scars with which the impostor's face was supposed to be deformed. He had accordingly got one made at Masuah, beat very thin out of a few ounces of gold which he had taken from a caravan that he had robbed. He wore it constantly upon his head as a token that he was not a candidate for the crown, but real sovereign, who had worn that mark of power from his infancy.

THE news of this impostor, with the usual exaggeration of followers, soon came to Sela Christos, governor of Tigre, who, seeing that the affair became more serious every day, resolved to attempt to check it. He conceived, however, he had little trust to put in the troops of his province, who all

of them were wavering whether they should not join the rebel. His sole dependence, then, was upon the troops of his own household, veteran soldiers, well paid and cloathed, and firmly attached to his person, and likewise upon the Portuguese. Above all, being himself a man of consummate courage and prudence, he was far from judging of the power of his enemy by the multitude of rabble which composed it.

- As soon as the armies came in presence of each other, Jacob offered the governor battle. But no sooner did the impostor's troops see the eagerness with which the small but chosen band rushed upon them, than they fled and dispersed; and though Sela Christos had taken every precaution to cut off the pretended Jacob from his usual sculking places, it was not possible to overtake or apprehend him; for he arrived in safety in one of the highest and most inaccessible mountains of the district, whence he looked down on Sela Christos and his army without apprehension, having behind him a retreat to the more distant and less known mountains of Hamazen, should his enemies press him further.

As long as Sela Christos remained with his little army in that country, the impostor Jacob continued on the highest part of the mountains, accompanied only by two or three of his most intimate friends, who being people whose families dwelt in the plain below, brought him constant intelligence of what passed there.

SELA CHRISTOS, wishing by all means to engage the enemy, marched into a considerable plain called *Mai-aquel*; but, seeing on every side the top of each mountain guarded by
troops

troops of foldiers, he was afraid he had advanced too far ; and, apprehensive left he should be inclosed in the midft of a multitude fo pofted, he began to think how he could beft make his retreat before he was furrounded by fo numerous enemies. But they no fooner faw his intention by the movement of his army, than, leaving their leader as a fpectator above, they fell on all fides upon Sela Chriftos's troops, who, having no longer any fafety but in their arms, began to attack the hill that was next them, which they ftormed as they would do a caftle. Finding the fmall refiftance that each of thefe pofts made, the governor divided his fmall army into fo many feparate bodies, leaving his cavalry in the plain below, who, without fighting, were only employed in flauhtering thofe his troops had diflodged from their feparate pofts.

THE day after, the impoftor afsembling his fattered troops, retreated towards the fea into the territory of Hamazen, between the country of the Baharnagafh and the mountains of the Habab.

SELA CHRISTOS, finding that, while he purfued his victory in thefe diftant parts, the fpirit of rebellion increafed nearer home, refolved to inform the king his brother of the unpromifing ftate of his affairs in Tigrè, and the great neceffity there was of his prefence there. Nor did Socinios lofe a moment after receiving this intelligence from Sela Chriftos, although it had found him, in one refpect, very ill prepared for fuch an undertaking ; for he had fent all his horfe from Coga upon an expedition againft the Shangalla and Gongas, nations on the north-weft border of this kingdom ; fo that, when he marched from Wainadega, his ca-

valry amounted to 530 men only, besides a small reinforcement brought by Emana Christos, governor of Amhara.

It was at Aibo the king turned off the road to Tigrè towards Begemder, and that day encamped at Wainadega. From Wainadega he advanced to Davada; and, crossing the Reb, he turned off by the way of Zang, and encamped at Kattamè. He then proceeded to Tzamè, and arrived at Hader. At this place some spies informed him that an advanced party of the Galla Marawa were strongly lodged in a hill not far off. Upon receiving this notice, Socinios ordered his army to refresh themselves, to extinguish all lights, and march with as little noise as possible.

WHILE it was scarce dawn of day, a strong detachment of the king's army furrounded the hill where the Galla were, and found there a small number of these savages placed like piquets to give the alarm and prevent surprize. Eleven Galla were slain, and their heads cut off and carried to the king, the first fruits of his expedition.

RESOLVING to profit by this early advantage, Socinios followed with all diligence, and came in sight of the army of the enemy, without their having taken the smallest alarm. They were lying closely and securely in their huts that they had made. A large ravine full of trees and stumps divided the two armies, and in part concealed them from each other. The king ordered Emana Christos, and Abeton Welleta Christos, to pass the ravine with the horse, and fall upon the Galla suddenly, throwing the heads of those of the advanced guard they had cut off on the ground towards them.

BEFORE the king's horse had passed the ravine, the Galla were alarmed, and mounted on horseback. As they never fight in order, it required no time to form; but they received the king's cavalry so rudely, that, though Emana Christos and the young prince behaved with the utmost courage, they were beat back, and obliged to fly with considerable loss, being entangled in the bushes. No sooner did the king observe that his horse were engaged, than he ordered his troops to pass the ravine to support them, and was desirous to bring on a general engagement. But a panic had seized his troops. They would not stir, but seemed benumbed and overcome by the cold of the morning, spectators of the ruin of the cavalry.

EMANA CHRISTOS, and those of the cavalry that had escaped the massacre, had repassed the ravine, and dispersed themselves in the front of the foot; while the victorious Marawa, like ignorant savages, pushed their victory to the very front of the king's line. Socinios, ordering all the drums of the army to beat and trumpets to sound, to excite some spirit in his troops, advanced himself before any of his soldiers, and slew the first Galla within his reach with his own hands. The example and danger the king exposed himself to, raised the indignation of the troops. They poured in crowds, without regarding order, upon the Marawa, great part of whom had already passed the ravine, and all that had passed it were cut to pieces.

THE Galla, unable to stand this loss, fled from the field, and immediately after left Begemder. The want of horse on the king's part saved their whole army from the destruction which would infallibly have been the consequence of

a vigorous pursuit, through a country where every inhabitant was an enemy. The king after this returned to his palace at Coga to finish the business he had in hand.

IN the mean time, a report was spread through all Tiggrè, that the king had been defeated by the Galla, and that Ras Sela Christos had repaired to Gondar in consequence of that disaster. The impostor Jacob lost no time in taking advantage of this report. He descended from his natural fortrefs, and, in conjunction with the governor of Axum, slew several people, and committed many ravages in Sirè. The Ras no sooner learned that he was encamped on plain ground, than he presented himself with the little army he had before; and, though the odds against him were excessive, yet by his presence and conduct, the rebels, though they fought this time with more than ordinary obstinacy, were defeated with great loss, and their leader, the supposed Jacob, forced again to his inaccessible mountains.

Socinius having now finished the affairs which detained him at Coga, and being informed that the southern Galla, resenting the defeat of the Marawa, had entered into a league to invade Abyssinia with united forces, and a complete army to burn and lay waste the whole country between the Tacazzé and Tzana, and to attack the emperor in his capital of Coga, which they were determined to destroy, sent orders to Kasmati Julius, his son-in-law, to join him immediately with what forces he had, as also to Kella Christos; and, being joined by both these officers and their troops, he marched and took post at Ebenaat in the district of Belessen, in the way by which the Galla intended to pass to the capital, and he resolved to await them there.

THE Galla advanced in their usual manner, burning and destroying churches and villages, and murdering without mercy all that were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands. The king bore these excesses of his enemy with the patience of a good general, who saw they contributed to his advantage. He therefore did not offer to check any of their disorders, but by not resisting rather hoped to encourage them. He had an army in number superior, and this was seldom the case; but in quality there was no comparison, five of the king's troops being equal to twenty of the enemy, and this was the general proportion in which they fought. He, therefore, contented himself with choosing proper ground to engage, and improving it by ambushes such as the nature of the field permitted or suggested.

It was the 7th of January 1608, early in the morning, that the Galla presented themselves to Socinios in battle, in a plain below Ebenaat, surrounded with small hills covered with wood. The Galla filled the whole plain, as if voluntarily devoting themselves to destruction, and from the hills and bushes were destroyed by fire-arms from enemies they did not see, who with a strong body took possession of the place through which they entered, and by which they were to return no more.

SOCINIOS that day, for what particular reason does not appear, distinguished himself among the midst of the Galla, by fighting like a common soldier. It is thought by the historians of those times, that he had received advice while at Coga, that his son-in-law Julius intended to rebel, and therefore he meant to discourage him by comparison of their personal abilities. This, however, is not probable; the
king's

king's character was established, and nothing more could be added to it. However that may be, all turned to the disadvantage of the Galla. No general or other officer thought himself entitled to spare his person more than the king; all fought like common soldiers; and, being the men best armed and mounted, and most experienced in the field, they contributed in proportion to the slaughter of the day. About 12,000 men on the part of the Galla were killed upon the spot; the very few that remained were destroyed by the peasants, whilst 400 men only fell on the part of the king, so it was a massacre rather than a battle.

SocINIOS now resolved to try his fortune against the impostor Jacob, and with that resolution he crossed Lamalmon, descending to the Tacazzè in his way to Sirè. Here, as on the frontiers of his province, he was met by Sela Christos, who brought Peter Paez along with them. Both were kindly received by the king, who encamped in the large plain before Axum, in consequence of a resolution he had long taken of being crowned with all the ancient ceremonies used on this occasion by former kings, while the royal residence was in the province of Tigrè.

It was on the 18th of March, according to their account, the day of our Saviour's first coming to Jerusalem, that this festival began. His army consisted of about 30,000 men. All the great officers, all the officers of state, and the court then present, were every man dressed in the richest and gayest manner. Nor was the other sex behind-hand in the splendour of their appearance. The king, dressed in crimson damask, with a great chain of gold round his neck, his head bare, mounted upon a horse richly caparisoned, advanced

at the head of his nobility, passed the outer court, and came to the paved way before the church. Here he was met by a number of young girls, daughters of the umbares, or supreme judges, together with many noble virgins standing on the right and left of the court.

Two of the noblest of these held in their hands a crimson cord of silk, somewhat thicker than common whip-cord, but of a looser texture, stretched across from one company to another, as if to shut up the road by which the king was approaching the church. When this cord was prepared and drawn tight about breast-high by the girls, the king entered, advancing at a moderate pace, curvetting and shewing the management of his horse. He was stopped by the tension of this string, while the damsels on each side asking who he was, were answered, "I am your king, the king of Ethiopia." To which they replied with one voice, "You shall not pass; you are not our king."

THE king then retires some paces, and then presents himself as to pass, and the cord is again drawn across his way by the young women so as to prevent him, and the question repeated, "Who are you?" The king answered, "I am your king, the king of Israel." But the damsels resolved, even on this second attack, not to surrender but upon their own terms; they again answer, "You shall not pass; you are not our king."

THE third time, after retiring, the king advances with a pace and air more determined; and the cruel virgins, again presenting the cord and asking who he is, he answers, "I am your king, the king of Sion;" and, drawing his

his sword, cuts the silk cord afunder. Immediately upon this the young women cry, "It is a truth, you are our king; truly you are the king of Sion." Upon which they begin to sing Hallelujah, and in this they are joined by the court and army upon the plain; fire-arms are discharged, drums and trumpets sound; and the king, amidst these acclamations and rejoicings, advances to the foot of the stair of the church, where he dismounts, and there sits down upon a stone, which, by its remains, apparently was an altar of Anubis, or the dog-star: At his feet there is a large slab of free-stone, on which is the inscription mentioned by Poncet, and which shall be quoted hereafter, when I come to speak of the ruins of Axum.

AFTER the king comes the nebrit, or keeper of the book of the law in Axum, supposed to represent Azarias the son of Zadock; then the twelve umbares, or supreme judges, who with Azarias accompanied Menilek, the son of Solomon, when he brought the book of the law from Jerusalem, and these are supposed to represent the twelve tribes. After these follow the Abuna at the head of the priests, and the Itcheguè at the head of the monks; then the court, who all pass through the aperture made by the division of the silk cord, which remains still upon the ground.

The king is first anointed, then crowned, and is accompanied half up the steps by the singing priests, called Dep-teras, chanting psalms and hymns. Here he stops at a hole made for the purpose in one of the steps, and is there fumigated with incense and myrrh, aloes and cassia. Divine service is then celebrated; and, after receiving the sacrament, he returns to the camp, where fourteen days should regularly

larly be spent in feasting, and all manner of rejoicing and military exercise.

THE king is, by the old custom, obliged to give a number of presents, the particulars of which are stated in the deftar, or treasury-book, the value, the person to whom they are due, and the time of giving; but a great part of these are gone into disuetude since the removal of the court from Tigrè, as also many of the offices are now suppressed, and with them the presents due to them.

THE nobles and the court were likewise obliged to give presents to the king upon that occasion. The present from the governor of Axum is two lions and a fillet of silk, upon which is wrote, "*Mo Anebasa am Nizilet Solomon am Negadé Jude*—The lion of the tribe of Judah and race of Solomon hath overcome;" this serves as a form of investiture of lands that the king grants, a ribband bearing this inscription being tied round the head of the person to whom the lands are given.

THIS governor was then in rebellion, so did not assist at the ceremony. Notwithstanding the difference of expence which I have mentioned, by suppressing places, presents, and dues, the king Tecla Haimanout told me at Gondar, that when he was in Tigrè, driven there by the late rebellion, Ras Michael had some thoughts of having him crowned there in contempt of his enemies; but, by the most moderate calculation that could be made, not to turn the ceremony into ridicule by parsimony, it would have cost 20,000 ounces of gold, or L. 50,000 Sterling; upon which he laid aside the thoughts of it, saying to the king, "Sir,

trust to me, 20,000 ounces of Tigrè iron shall crown you better; if more is wanted, I will bestow it upon your enemies with pleasure till they are satisfied;" meaning the iron balls with which his soldiers loaded their muskets.

AFTER the coronation was over, the king passed the Mareb, desiring to finish his campaign by the death of his competitor Jacob; but that impostor knew too well the superiority of his rival, and hid himself in the inmost recesses, without other attendants than a few goats, who furnished him with their milk, as well as their society.

SOCINIOS left the affair of the rebel Jacob to be ended by Amfala Christos, an officer of great prudence, whom he made governor of Tigré; and, taking his brother Ras Sela Christos along with him, returned to Coga*. Amfala Christos being seized with a grievous sickness, saw how vain it was for him to pursue the suppression of a rebellion conducted by such a head as this impostor Jacob, and therefore secretly applied to two young men, Zara Johannes and Amha Georgis, brothers, and sons of the Shum Welled Georgis, who had committed murder, and were outlawed by Socinios, and, keeping hid in the mountains, had joined in fellowship with the impostor Jacob.

THESE, gained by the promise of pardon given them by Amfala Christos, chose an opportunity which their intimacy gave them, and, falling upon Jacob unawares in his retirement,

* Then the metropolis upon the Lake Tzana.

ment, they flew him, cut his head off, and sent it to the king at Coga, who received it very thankfully, and returned it to Tigrè to Amfala Christos, to be exposed publicly in all the province to undeceive the people ; for it now appeared, that he had neither scars in his face, broken jaw, nor loss of teeth, but that the covering was intended only to conceal the little resemblance he bore to king Jacob, slain, as we have seen, at the battle of Lebart ; and he was now found to have been a herdsman, in those very mountains of Bisan to which he had so often fled for refuge while his rebellion lasted.

THE king, in his return from Tigrè, passing by Fremona, sent to the Jesuits there thirty ounces of gold, about L. 75 Sterling, for their immediate exigency ; testifying, in the most gracious manner, his regret, “ That the many affairs in which he was engaged had prevented him from hearing mass in their convent, as he very sincerely wished to do ; but he left with them the Abuna Simon, to whom he had recommended to study their religion, and be a friend to it.”

IN this he shewed his want of penetration and experience ; for though he had seen wars between soldier and soldier, who, after having been in the most violent state of enmity, had died in defence of each other as friends, he was not aware of that degree of enmity which reigns upon difference of opinion, not to say religion, between priest and priest. It was not long, however, before he saw it, and the example was in the person of his present friend the Abuna Simon.

WHILE Socinios was yet in Tigré, news were brought to Coga from Woggora to Sanuda Tzef Leham * of Dembea, who could not accompany the king to Tigré on account of sickness, but was left with the charge of the capital and palace during the king's absence, that Melchizedec, one of the meanest and lowest servants of the late king Melec Segued, had rebelled, and was collecting troops, consisting of soldiers, servants, and dependents of that prince, and had slain some of Socinios's servants. Sanuda was a brave and active officer; but, being without troops, (the king having carried the whole army to Tigrè) immediately set out from Maitsha to the town of Tchelga, one of the frontiers of Abyssinia, possessed by Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs.

It is here to be observed, that though the territorial right of Tchelga did then, and does still appertain to the kingdom of Abyssinia, yet the possession of it is ceded by agreement to Wed Ageeb, under whose protection the caravans from Egypt and Sennaar, and those from Abyssinia to Sennaar and Egypt, were understood to be ever since they were cut off in the last century by the *bascha* of Suakem, for this purpose, that a customhouse might be erected, and the duties divided between the two kingdoms equally. The same is the case with Serké, a town belonging to Sennaar, ceded for the same purpose to the king of Abyssinia.

It happened that Abdelcader †, son of Ounfa, late king of Sennaar, or of Funge, as he is called in the Abyssinian annals, had been deposed by his subjects in the 4th year of his

* Register of the cattle; so the governor of Dembea is called.

† See the History of the rise of this monarchy in my return through Sennaar.

his reign, and remained at Tchelga under the mutual protection of Wed Ageeb and the emperor of Abyffinia, a kind of prisoner to them both; and had brought with him a number of foldiers and dependents, the partakers of his former good fortune, who, finding safety and good ufage at Tchelga, were naturally well-affected to the king. Thefe, ready mounted and armed, joined Sanuda immediately upon his declaring the exigency; and with thefe he marched ftraight to Coga, to the defence of the palace with which he had been intrufted.

MELCHIZEDEC, whose defign was againft Coga, no fooner heard Sanuda was arrived there than he marched to furprife him, and a very bloody and obftinate engagement followed. The Funge, piqued in honour to render this fervice to their protector, fought fo obftinately that they were all flain, and Sanuda, mounted that day upon a fleet horfe belonging to Socinios, efaped with difficulty, much wounded.

As foon as Socinios heard of this misfortune, he fent Ras Emana Chriftos, who marched ftraight to Woggora, creating Zenobius, fon of Imacl, governor of that diftrict; and there he found Sanuda Zenobius and Ligaba Za Denghel together, in a place called Deberaffo.

As foon as the rebel Melchizedec heard Emana Chriftos was come, and with him the fore-mentioned noblemen, he fet himfelf to exert the utmoft of his power to draw together forces of all kinds from every part he could get them, and his army was foon increafed to fuch a degree as,

notwithstanding the presence of Emana Christos, to strike terror into all the territory and towns of Dembea. Nothing was wanted but a king of the royal race for whom to fight. Without a chief of this kind, it was evident that the army, however often successful, would at last disperse. They, therefore, brought one Arzo, a prince of the royal blood, from his hiding-place in Begemder. Arzo, in return for a throne, conferred the place of Ras upon Melchizedec. Za Christos, son of Hatzir Abib, was appointed to the command of the army under him; and, having finished this and many such necessary preparatives, they marched straight to meet Emana Christos, with a better countenance than rebel armies generally bear.

It was the 9th of March 1611, at 9 in the morning, when the two armies were first in sight of each other, nor did they long delay coming to an engagement. The battle was very obstinate and bloody; Melchizedec re-established his character for worth, at least as a soldier; the same did Za Christos. Of the competitor Arzo, history makes no mention; his blood, probably, was too precious to risk the spilling of it, being so far-fetched as from king Solomon. After a most obstinate resistance, part of Za Christos's army was broken and put to flight; but it rallied so often, and sold the ground it yielded so dear, that it gave time to Emana Christos to come up to his army's assistance.

THE Ras, who was as brave a soldier as he was a wise and prudent general, saw it was a time when all should be risked, and threw himself into the midst of his enemies; and he was now arrived near the place where Melchizedec fought, when that rebel, seeing him advancing so fast a-

mong his slaughtered followers, guessing his intention, declined the combat, turned his horse and fled, while affairs even yet appeared in his favour. This panic of the general had the effect it ordinarily has in barbarous armies. Nobody considered how the prospect of the general issue stood ; they fled with Melchizedec, and lost more men than would have secured them victory had they stood in their ranks.

A BODY of troops, joined by some peasants of Begemder, pursued Melchizedec so closely that they came up with him and took him prisoner, together with Tensa Christos, a very active partizan, and enemy to Emana Christos. Having brought them to the camp, before the Ras returned to Coga, they were tried and condemned to die for rebellion, as traitors, and the sentence immediately executed, after which their heads were sent to the king. Very soon after this, Arzo, and his general Za Christos, were taken and sent to the king, who ordered them to be tried by the judges in common form, and they underwent the same fate.

THE king was employed in the winter season while he resided at Coga, in building a new church, called St Gabriel. But the season of taking the field being come, he marched out with his army and halted at Gogora, sending Emana Christos and Sela Christos against the rebels ; these were not in a particular clan, or province, for all the country was in rebellion, from the head of the Nile round, eastward, to the frontiers of Tigré. Part of them indeed were not in arms, but refused to pay their quota of the revenue ; part of them were in arms, and would neither pay, nor admit a governor from the king among them ; others willingly submitted

mitted to Socinios, and were armed, only thereby to exempt themselves from payment.

SELA CHRISTOS fell upon the inhabitants of the mountainous district of Gufman, on the Nile, whose principal strong-hold, Oureé Amba, he forced, killing many, and carrying away their children as slaves, which, upon the intercession of Peter Paez, were given to the Jesuits to be educated as Catholics.

THE next attempt was upon the Gongas, a black Pagan nation, with which he had the same success; the rest were the Agows, a very numerous people, all confederates and in arms, and not willing to hear of any composition. The king ordered one of these tribes, the Zalabassa, to be extirpated as far as possible, and their country laid waste. But notwithstanding this example, which met with great interruption in the execution, the Agows continued in rebellion for several years afterwards, but much impoverished and lessened in number by variety of victories obtained over them.

THE two next years were spent in unimportant skirmishes with the Agows of Damot, and with the Galla, invaders of Gojam. In 1615, the year after, Tecla Georgis made governor of Samen, and Welled Hawaryat, shum of Tsalemat*, were both sent against a rebel who declared himself competitor for the crown. His name was Amdo. He pretended to be the late king Jacob, son of Melec Segued; and this character he gave himself, without the smallest communication

* A low territory at the foot of Lamalmon.

cation with the relations or connections of that prince. As soon as Affera Christos and Tecla Garima, servants of Welled Hawaryat, heard of this adventurer, they surpris'd him in Tfalemat, and, putting him in irons, confin'd him in the house of Affera Christos.

GIDEON, king of the Jews, whose residence was on the high mountain of Samen, upon hearing that Amdo was prisoner, sent a body of armed men who surpris'd Affera Christos in his own house in the night, and killed him, bringing with them his prisoner Amdo to Samen, and deliver'd him to Gideon there; who not only took him into protection, but assist'd him in raising an army by every means in his power. There were not wanting there idle vagabonds and lawless people enough, who fled to the standard of a prince whose sole view seem'd to be murder, robbery, and all sort of licentiousness. It was not long till Amdo, by the assistance of Gideon, found himself at the head of an army, strong enough to leave the mountain, and try his fortune in the plain below, where he laid waste Shawada, Tfalemat, and all the countries about Samen which persevered in their duty to the king.

SOCINIOS, upon this, appointed Julius his son-in-law governor of Woggora, Samen, Waag, and Abbergalé, that is, of all the low countries from the borders of the Tacazzè to Dembea. Abram, an old officer of the king, desirous to stop the progress of the rebel, march'd towards him, and offer'd him battle; but that brave officer had not the success his intention deserv'd, for he was defeated and slain; which had such an effect upon Julius, that, without hazarding his fortune farther, he sent to beseech the king to march

against Amdo with all possible expedition, as his affairs were become desperate in that part of his dominions.

THE king hereupon marched straight to Woggora, and joined Julius at Shimbra-Zuggan; thence he descended from Samen, and encamped upon Tocur-Ohha, (the black river) thence he proceeded to Debil, and then to Sobra; and from this last station he sent a detachment of his army to attack a strong mountain called Mesliraba, one of the natural fortresses of Gideon, which was forced by the king's troops after some resistance, and the whole inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, put to the sword, for such were the orders of the king.

THIS first success very much disheartened the rebels, for Mesliraba was, by nature, one of the strongest mountains, and it, besides, had been fortified by art, furnished with plenty of provisions, and a number of good troops. The next mountain Socinios attacked was Hotchi, and the third Amba Za Hancassé, where he had the like success, and treated the inhabitants in the same manner; thence he removed his army to Seganat, where he met with a very stout resistance; but this mountain, too, was at last taken, Gideon himself escaping narrowly by the bravery of his principal general, who, fighting desperately, was slain by a musketeer.

THE constant success of the king, and the bloody manner in which he pursued his victory, began to alarm Gideon, lest the end should be the extirpation of his whole nation. He, therefore, made an overture to the king, that, if he would pardon him and grant him peace, he would deliver the rebel Amdo bound into his hands.

THE king assented to this, and Amdo was accordingly delivered up; and, being convicted of rebellion and murder, he was sentenced to be nailed to a cross, and to remain there till he died. But the terrible cries and groans which he made while they were fixing him to the cross, so much shocked the ears of the king, that he ordered him to be taken down, and his head struck off with an ax, which was executed in the midst of the camp.

SOCINIOS after this retired to Dancaz, and ordered Kefla governor of Gojam, and Jonacl his master of the household, to march suddenly and surprise Belaya, a country belonging to the Gongas and Guba, Pagan nations, on whom, every year, he made war for the sake of taking slaves for the use of the palace. These two officers, with a large body, mostly horse, fell unawares upon the savages at Belaya, slaying part, and bringing away their children. But not content with doing this, they likewise attacked the two districts of Agows, Dengui and Sankara, then in peace with the king, and drove away an immense number of cattle, which the king no sooner heard, than he ordered a strict search to be made, and the whole cattle belonging to the Agows to be gathered together, and restored to their respective owners; a piece of justice which softened the hearts of this people more than all the severities that had been hitherto used; and the good effects of which were soon after seen upon the Agows, though it produced something very different in the conduct of Jonacl.

THE king this year, 1616, left his capital at the usual time, in the month of November, and ordered his whole household to attend him. His intention was against the Galla on the

west of Gojam, especially the tribe called Libo. But this campaign was rendered fruitless by the death of the king's eldest son, Kennaffer Christos, a young prince of great hopes, esteemed both by the king and the people. He had an excellent understanding, and the most affable manners possible, to those even whom he did not like; was very fond of the soldiers; merciful, generous, and liberal; and was thought to be the favourite of the king his father, who buried him with great pomp in the church of Debra Roma, built by king Isaac, in the lake Tzana.

IN the midst of this mourning, there came a very bloody order* from the king. History barely tells us the fact, but does not assign any other reason than the wanton manner in which Gideon king of the Jews had endeavoured to disturb his reign and kingdom, which was thought a sufficient excuse for it. However this may be, the king gave orders to Kafmati Julius, Kafmati Welled Hawaryat, Billetana Gueta Jonael, and Fit-Auraris Hofannah, to extirpate all the Falasha that were in Foggora, Janfakara, and Bagenarwè, to the borders of Samen; also all that were in Bagla, and in all the districts under their command, wherever they could find them; and very few of them escaped, excepting some who fled with Phineas.

IN this massacre, which was a very general one, and executed very suddenly, fell Gideon king of that people; a man of great reputation, not only among his subjects, but throughout all Abyssinia, reputed also immensely rich. His treasures,

* It was probably part of the fruits of the new religion, and the work of his new religious advisers.

tures, supposed to be concealed in the mountains, are the objects of the search of the Abyssinians to this day.

THE children of those that were slain were sold for slaves by the king; and all the Falasha in Dembea, in the low countries immediately in the king's power, were ordered upon pain of death to renounce their religion, and be baptised. To this they consented, seeing there was no remedy; and the king unwisely imagined, that he had extinguished, by one blow, the religion which was that of his country long before Christianity, by the unwarrantable butchery of a number of people whom he had surpris'd living in security under the assurance of peace. Many of them were baptised accordingly, and they were all ordered to plow and harrow upon the sabbath-day.

THE king next sent orders to Sela Christos, and Kefla governor of Gojam, that, assembling their troops, they should transfer the war into Bizamo, a province on the south side of the Nile, called also in the books a kingdom. Through this lies the road of the merchants leading to Narea. It is inhabited by several clans of Pagans, which together make the great division of these nations into Boren, and Bertuma Galla*.

THE army passed the Nile, laying waste the whole country, driving off the cattle, collecting the women and children as slaves, and putting all the men to the sword; without these people, though they make constant inroads into

* The words, Boren, and Bertuma Galla, have no meaning in the Ethiopic.

Gojam, appearing anywhere in force to stop the desolation of their country. The whole tract between Narea and the Nile was now cleared of enemies, and a number of priests at that time sent to revive drooping Christianity in those parts.

IN the year 1617, a league was again made among the Boren Galla, that part of them should invade Gojam, while the others (namely the Marawa) should enter Begemder. Upon hearing this, the king in haste marched to Begemder, that he might be ready in case of need to assist Tigré. He then fixed his head-quarters at Shima, but from this he speedily removed; and, passing Emfras, came to Dobit, a favourite residence of the emperor Jacob, where he held a council to determine which of the two provinces he should first assist.

It was the general opinion of his officers, that to march at that time of the year into Tigré by Begemder, was to destroy the army, and distress both provinces; that an army, well provided with horse, was necessary for acting with success against the Galla, and that, in effect, though the royal army at present was so appointed, yet there was no grass at that time of the year in all that march for the subsistence of the cavalry, and very little water for the use of man or beast, an inconvenience the Galla themselves must experience if they attempted an invasion that way. It was, moreover, urged, that, if the king should march through Woggora and Lamalmon, they might get more food for their beasts, and water too; but then they would throw themselves far from the place where the Galla had entered, and would be obliged to fall into the former road, with the inconveniencies already stated. The consequence of this de-
liberation

liberation was, that it was with very great regret the good of the commonweal obliged them to leave Tigré to the protection of Providence alone for a time, and hasten to meet the enemy that were then laying Gojam waste.

WITH this view the king left Dobit, and came to the river Gomara in Foggora. He then passed the Nile near Dara, and came to Selalo, where he heard that the Djawi had passed the Nile from Bizamo, and entered Gojam at the opposite side to where he then was. He there left his baggage, and, by a forced march, advancing three days journey in one, he came to Bed, upon the river Sadi; but, instead of finding the enemy there, he received intelligence from Sela Christos, that he had met the Galla immediately after their passing the Nile; had fought them, and cut their army to pieces, without allowing them time to ravage the country.

UPON this good news the king turned off on the road to Tchegal and Wainadassa, and ordered Bela Christos to assemble as great an army as he could, and fall upon the Djawi and Galla in Walaka and Shoa, as also Ras Sela Christos, to pass the Nile and join him there.

THAT general lost no time, but marched straight to Amca Ohha, or the river Amca, where he found the Edjow, who fled upon his coming, without giving him any opportunity of bringing them to an engagement, abandoning their wives, children, and substance, to the mercy of the enemy. Sela Christos, having finished this expedition as he intended, returned to join the king, whom he found encamped upon the river Suqua, near Debra Werk, guarding those provinces in the absence of Sela Christos. From this
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the king, retreating towards Dembea, passed the Nile near Dara, and encamped at Zinzenam, whence he marched round the lake into Dembea to his palace at Gorgora.

THIS village, whose name signifies *rain upon rain*, affords us a proof of what I have said in speaking of the cause of the overflowing of the Nile, in contradiction to the Adulitic inscription, that no snow falls in Abyssinia, or rather, that though snow may have fallen in the course of centuries, it is a phenomenon so rare as not to have a name or word to express it in the whole language, and is entirely unknown to the people in general, at least to the west of the Tacazzé.

THE Abyssinian historian, from whom these memoirs are composed, says, “ That this village, called Zinzenam, has its name from an extraordinary circumstance that once happened in these parts, for a shower of rain fell, which was not properly of the nature of rain, as it did not run upon the ground, but remained very light, having scarce the weight of feathers, of a beautiful white colour like flour ; it fell in showers, and occasioned a darkness in the air more than rain, and liker to mist. It covered the face of the whole country for several days, retaining its whiteness the whole time, then went away like dew, without leaving any smell or unwholesome effect behind it.

THIS was certainly the accidental phenomenon of a day; for, notwithstanding the height of the mountains Taranta and Lamalmon, snow never was seen there, at least for ages past; and Lasta, in whose mountains armies have perished by cold, as far as a very particular inquiry could go, never yet had snow upon them ; and Zinzenam is not in these mountains,

tains, or in any elevated situation. On the contrary, it is adjoining to the plain country of Foggora, near where it borders upon Begemder, not above 20 miles from the second cataract, or 40 miles from Gondar; so that this must have been a short and accidental change of the atmosphere, of which there are examples of many different kinds, in the histories of all countries.

As soon as the weather permitted, the king left his palace at Gorgora in the way to Tocussa, where he staid several days; removed thence to Tenkel, where he continued also four days, and proceeded to Gunkè, where he halted. From his head-quarters at Gunkè, the king, meditating an expedition against Atbara, sent a messenger to Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs, desiring a meeting with him before he attacked the Funge, for so they call the subjects of the new monarchy, lately established at Sennaar by the conquest of the Arabs, under Wed Ageeb, a very considerable part of whose territory they had taken by force, and now enjoyed as their own possessions.

ABDELCADER, son of Ounfa, was the ninth prince of the race of Funge then reigning; a weak, and ill-inclined man, but with whom Socinios had hitherto lived in friendship, and, in a late treaty, had sent him as a present, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, richly ornamented with gold, with a gold chain to hang it by. Abdelcader, on his part, returned to Socinios a trained falcon, of an excellent kind, very much esteemed among the Arabs.

Soon after this, Abdelcader was deposed by his brother Adelan, son of Ounfa, and fled to Tchelga, under protection

of the king of Abyssinia, who allowed him an honourable maintenance; a custom always observed in such cases in the East, by princes towards their unfortunate neighbours.

BAADY, son of Abdelcader, an active and violent young prince, although he deposed his uncle Adelan, took this protection of his father in bad part. It was likewise suggested to him, that the present sent by Socinios, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, imported, that Socinios considered him as his vassal, the drum being the sign of investiture sent by the king to any one of his subjects whom he appoints to govern a province, and that the return of the falcon was likely to be considered as the acknowledgement of a vassal to his superior. Baady, upon his accession to the throne, was resolved to rectify this too great respect shewn on the part of his father, by an affront he resolved to offer. With this view, he sent to Socinios two old, blind, and lame horses.

SOCINIOS took this amiss, as it was intended he should, and the flight was immediately followed by the troops of Atbara, under Nile Wed Ageeb, sent by Baady to make an inroad into Abyssinia, to lay waste the country, and drive off the people, with orders to sell them as slaves.

AMONG the most active in this expedition, were those of the town of Serké. When Baady complained that his father and rival was protected in his own town of Tchelga, it had been answered, That true it was, Tchelga had been ceded and did belong to Sennaar, for every purpose of revenue, but that the sovereignty of the place had never been alienated or surrendered to the king of Sennaar, but remained now, as ever, vested in the king of Abyssinia. Serké stood precisely in

in the same situation with respect to Abyssinia, as Tchelga did to Sennaar, when Socinios demanded satisfaction for the violence committed against him by his own town of Serkè. The same answer was given him, That for all fiscal purposes Serkè was his, but owed him no allegiance; for, being part of the kingdom of Sennaar, it was bound to assist its sovereign in all wars against his enemies.

SOCINIOS, deeply engaged in the troubles that attended the beginning of his reign, passed over for a time both the affront and injury, but sent into Atbara to Nile Wed Ageeb, proposing a treaty with him independent of the king of Sennaar.

THERE were, at this time, three sorts of people that inhabited the whole country from lat. 13° (the mountains of Abyssinia) to the tropic of Cancer (the frontiers of Egypt.) The first was the Funge, or negroes, established in Atbara since the year 1504, by conquest. The second, the old inhabitants of that country, known in very early ages by the name of *Shepherds*, which continues with them to this day; and these lived under a female government. The third, the Arabs, who came hither after the conquest of Egypt, in an army under Calid Ibn el Waalid, or Saif Ullah, *the Sword of God*, during the Khalifat of Omar, destined to subdue Nubia, and, still later, in the time of Salidan and his brother.

THESE Arabs had associated with the first inhabitants, the Shepherds, from a similarity of life and manners, and, by treaty, the Funge had established a tribute to be paid them from both; after which, these were to enjoy their former habitations without further molestation.

THIS prince of the Arabs, Nile Wed Ageeb, embraced the offer of the king of Abyssinia very readily; and a treaty was accordingly made between Socinios and him, and a territory in Abyssinia granted him on the frontiers, to which he could retire in safety, as often as his affairs were embroiled with the state of Sennaar.

IT happened soon after this, that Alico, a Mahometan, governor of the Mazaga for Socinios, that is, of Nara and Ras el Feel, a low country, as the name imports, of black earth, revolted from his master, and fled to Sennaar, carrying with him a number of the king's horses. Socinios made his complaint to the king of Sennaar, who took no notice of it, neither returned any answer, which exasperated Socinios so much that it produced the present expedition, and was a cause of much bloodshed, and of a war which, at least in intention, lasts to this day between the two kingdoms.

WED AGEEB, upon Socinios's first summons, came to Gunkè, his head-quarters, attended by a number of troops, and some of the best horse in Atbara. Upon his entering the king's tent, he prostrated himself, (as is the Abyssinian custom) acknowledged himself the king's vassal, and brought presents with him to a very considerable value. Socinios received him with great marks of distinction and kindness. He decorated him with a chain and bracelets of gold, and gave him a dagger of exquisite workmanship, mounted with the same metal; clothed him in silk and damask after the Abyssinian fashion, and confirmed the ancient treaty with him. The fruit of all this was presently seen; the king and his new ally fell suddenly upon Serké, put all the male inhabitants to the sword, sold the women and children as

slaves, and burned the town to the ground. The same they did to every inhabited place on that side of the frontier, west to Fazuclo. After which, the king, having sent a sarcastic compliment to Baady, returned to Dancaz, taking Wed Ageeb with him.

SOCINIOS had only ravaged the frontier of the kingdom of Sennaar to the westward, from Serké towards Fazuclo. This was but a part of the large scheme of vengeance he had resolved to execute progressively from Serké, in reparation of the affront he had received from the king of the Funge. But he delegated what remained to the two princes his sons, and to the governor of Tigrè.

WELLED HAWARYAT, at the head of the Koccob horse, and another body of cavalry reckoned equal in valour, called *Maia*, and the greatest part of the king's household troops, were ordered to fall upon that part of the frontier of Sennaar which the king had left from Serké eastward. Melca Christos, with the horse of Siré and Samen, was appointed to attack the frontier still farther east, opposite to the province of Siré. Tecla Georgis, governor of Tigrè, was directed to lay waste that part of the kingdom of Sennaar bordering upon the frontiers of his province.

THE whole of this expedition succeeded to a wish; only Melea Christos, in passing through the country of Shangalla, was met by a large army of that people, who, thinking the expedition intended against them, had attacked him in his passage, with some appearance of advantage; but by his own exertions, and those of his troops alarmed at their prince's danger, he not only extricated himself from
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the bad situation he was in, but gave the Shangalla so entire an overthrow, that one of their tribes was nearly exterminated by that day's slaughter, and crowds of women and children sent slaves to the king at Dancaz.

THE delay that this occasioned had no bad effect upon the expedition. The victorious troops poured immediately into Atbara under Melca Christos, and completed the destruction made by Welled, Hawaryat, and the governor of Tigré. All Sennaar was filled with people flying from the conquerors, and an immense number of cattle was driven away by the three armies. Baady seems to have been an idle spectator of this havock made in his kingdom; and the armies returned without loss to Dancaz, loaded with plunder.

STILL the vengeance of Socinios was not satisfied. The Baharnagash, Guebra Mariam, was commanded to march against Fatima queen of the Shepherds, called at that time Negusta Errum, queen of the Greeks. This was a princess who governed the remnant of that ancient race of people, once the sovereigns of the whole country, who, for several dynasties, were masters of Egypt, and who still, among their ancient customs, preserved that known one, of always placing a woman upon the throne. Her residence was at Mendera*, on the N. E. of Atbara, one of the largest and most populous towns in it; a town, indeed, built like the rest, of clay, straw, and reeds, but not less populous or flourishing on that account. It was in the way of the caravans from Suakem, both to Abyssinia and Sennaar, as also of those large caravans to and from Sudan, the Negro country upon the Niger, which then came, and still use that road in their way to Mecca. Its female sovereign was considered as guardian

* See the Map.

guardian of that communication, and the caravans passing it.

THE Baharnagash had in orders from Socinios to pursue this queen till he had taken her prisoner, and to bring her in that condition into his presence. The enterprise was by no means an easy one. Great part of the road was without water ; but Guebra Mariam, the Baharnagash, was an active and prudent officer, and perfectly acquainted with the several parts of the country. With a small, but veteran army, he marched down the Mareb, between that river and the mountains, destroying all the places through which he passed, putting the inhabitants unmercifully to the sword, that no one might approach him, nor any report be made of his numbers, which were everywhere magnified by those that escaped, and who computed them from the greatness of the desolation they had occasioned.

ON the 13th day he came before Mendera, and sent a summons to the queen Fatima to surrender. Being told that she had fled on his approach, he answered, That he cared not where she was ; but that, unless she surrendered herself prisoner before he entered Mendera, he would first set the town on fire, and then quench the flames by the blood of its inhabitants.

FATIMA, though old and infirm, was too great a lover of her people to risk the fulfilling this threat from any consideration of what might happen to her. She surrendered herself to Guebra Mariam, with two attendants ; and he, without loss of time, marched back to his own country, abstaining from every sort of violence or excess in his way,

from respect to his female prisoner, whom he brought in triumph before Socinios to Dancaz, and was the first messenger of his own victory.

SOCINIOS received this queen of the Greeks on his throne ; but, in consideration of her infirmities, dispensed with the ceremony of prostration, constantly observed in Abyssinia on being introduced to the presence of the king : seeing that she was unable to stand during the time of her interrogation, he ordered a low stool to be set for her on the ground ; a piece of consideration very rarely shewn to any stranger in Abyssinia, however great their dignity and quality.

SOCINIOS sternly demanded of his prisoner, “ Why she and her predecessors, being vassals to the crown of Abyssinia, had not only omitted the payment of their tribute, but had not even sent the customary presents to him upon his accession to the throne ? ”

To this the queen answered with great frankness and candour, “ That it was true, such tributes and presents were due, and were also punctually paid from old times by her ancestors to his, as long as protection was afforded them and their people, and this was the principal cause of paying that tribute ; but the Abyssinians having first suffered the country to be in great part conquered by the Arabs, and then again by the Funge, without ever interfering, she had concluded a peace with the Funge of Sennaar, and paid the tribute to them, in consequence of which they defended her from the Arabs : That she had had no soldiers but such as were employed in keeping a strict watch over the road through the desert to Suakem, which was anciently trusted

to her; that the other part of her subjects was occupied in keeping and rearing great herds of cattle for the markets of Sennaar and other towns, as well as camels for the caravans of Mecca, Cairo, and Sudan, both employments being of public benefit; and, therefore, as she did harm to none, she had a greater reason to wonder what could be his motive of sending so far from home to seek her, and her harmless subjects, in the desert, with such effusion of innocent blood."

THE king hearing this sagacious answer, which was followed by many others of the kind, was extremely pleased; but assured her, "That he intended to maintain his ancient right both over her subjects, and the Arabs under Wed Ageeb, who was now his vassal, in all the country from Fazuclo to Suakem; that he considered the Funge as usurpers, and would certainly treat them as such." After this Socinius dismissed the queen, and gave her assurances of protection, having first clothed her as his vassal in silk and damask, after the fashion of women in her own country.

BUT it was not long before this train of success met with a considerable check. Very soon afterwards, the king being in Gojam, a message was brought to him from the principal people of Narea, informing him plainly, "That Benero, having become cruel and avaricious, put many people to death wantonly, and many more for the sake of their money; having taken from them their wives and daughters, either for his own pleasure, or to sell them as slaves to the Galla—they had at last murdered him, and chosen a man in his room distinguished for his virtue and goodness."

THE king was very much exasperated at this message. He told them, however bad Benero might have been, he considered his murder as an insult done to himself, and had, therefore, dispatched Mustapha Basha with some troops, and given command to all the Mahometans in Narea to assist him, and to inquire into the death of Benero, and the merit of his successor.

At the same time, the Galla made an inroad into Begemder; and Welled Hawaryat, assembling what troops he could, in haste, to stop the desolation of that province, and having come in sight of the enemy, he was forsaken by his army, and slain, together with the Cantiba of Dembea, Amdo, and Nile Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs, after fighting manfully for the king. Socinios, upon the arrival of this news, gave himself up to immoderate sorrow; not so much for the loss of his army which had misbehaved, as for the death of Welled Hawaryat his favourite son, and Amdo and Nile, the two best officers in his army.

It will now be necessary that we look back a little to the state of religious affairs in Abyssinia, which began from this time to have influence in every measure, and greatly to promote the troubles of that empire; though they were by no means their only cause, as some have said, with a view to throw greater odium upon the Jesuits, who surely have enough to answer for, without inflaming the account by any exaggeration.

PAEZ, in the course of building the palace at Gorgora, had deservedly astonished the whole kingdom by a display of his universal genius and capacity. If he was assiduous
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and diligent in raising this fabric, he had not neglected the advancing of another, the conversion of Abyssinia to the obedience of the see of Rome.

RAS SELA CHRISTOS (if we believe these missionaries) had converted himself, by reading with attention the Abyssinian books only. Being about to depart from Gojam to fight against the Galla, he wanted very much to have made his renunciation and confession in the presence of Peter Paez. But, as he was busied at Gorgora building a convent and palace there, he contented himself with another Jesuit, Francisco Antonio d'Angelis; and, being victorious in his expedition, he gave the fathers ground and a sum of money to build a monastery at Collela, which was now the third in Abyssinia belonging to the Jesuits.

As for the king, though probably already determined in his own mind, he had not taken any step so decisive as could induce the compliance of others. Disputes were constantly maintained, for the most part in his presence, between the missionaries and the Abyssinian monks, chiefly concerning the long-agitated question, the two natures in Christ, in which, although the victory declared always in favour of the Jesuits, if we may credit their representations, no conviction followed on the part of the adversaries. At last Abuna Simon complained to the king, that unusual and irregular things had been permitted without his knowledge; that disputes upon articles of faith had been held without calling him, or his being permitted to give his clergy the advantage of his support in these controversies.

THE king, who did not believe that the Abuna's eloquence or learning would make any great alteration, ordered the disputations to be held a-new in the Abuna's presence. That priest's ignorance made the matter worse; and the king, holding this point as now settled, made his first public declaration, that there were two natures in Christ, perfect God and perfect man, really distinct between themselves, but united in one divine person, which is the Christ.

AT this time, letters came by way of India, both from the king of Spain, Philip II. dated in Madrid the 15th of March 1609, and from the pope Paul V. of the 4th of January 1611. These letters contain nothing but general declamatory exhortations to Socinios to persevere in the Christian faith, assuring him of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, instead of those Portuguese regiments which he had solicited. However, the affair of the conversion being altogether settled between the king and Paez, it was thought proper to make the renunciation first, and then depend upon the king of Spain and the pope for sending the soldiers, if their prayers were not effectual.

It was necessary that Socinios should write to the pope, notifying his submission to the see of Rome. But letters on such a subject were thought of too great consequence to be sent, as former dispatches to Europe had been, without being accompanied by proper persons, who, upon occasion, might assume the character of ambassadors, and give any assurance or explanation needful.

It was at the same time considered, that the way by Ma-suah was so liable to accidents, the intermediate province of Tigré

Tigré being still as it were in a state of rebellion, that it would be easy for the enemies of the Catholic faith to intercept these messengers and letters by the way, so that their contents might be published amongst the king's enemies in Abyssinia, without ever being made known in Europe. Some proposed the longer, but, as they apprehended, the more secure way, by passing Narca and the provinces south of the frontiers of that kingdom, partly inhabited by Gentiles, partly by Mahometans, to Melinda, on the Indian Ocean, where they might embark for Goa.

Lots were cast among the missionaries who of their number should undertake this long and dangerous journey. The lot fell upon Antonio Fernandes, a man of great prudence, much esteemed by the king, and by the general voice allowed to be the properest of all the society for this undertaking. He, on his part, named Fecur Egzie (*beloved of the Lord*) as his companion, to be ambassador to the king of Spain and the pope. This man had been one of the first of the Abyssinians converted to the Catholic faith by the Jesuits, and he continued in it steadily to his death. He was a person of tried courage and prudence, and of a pleasant and agreeable conversation.

It was the beginning of March 1613 Antonio Fernandes * set out for Gojam, where was Ras Sela Christos. Fecur Egzie had set out before, that he might adjust his family affairs, and took with him ten Portuguese, six of whom were to go

* See the provincial letters of the Jesuits in Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 5.

no farther than Narea, and return, the other four to embark with him for India.

THE governor detained the small company till he procured guides from among the Shats and Gallas, barbarous nations near Narea, and eastward of it, from whom he took hostages for properly protecting this caravan in their way, paying them well, as an encouragement for behaving honestly and faithfully.

ON the 15th of April they had set out from Umbarma, then the head-quarters of Sela Christos, who gave them for guards forty men armed with shields and javelins. Nor was it long before their difficulties began. Travelling about two days to the west, they came to Senassic, the principal village or habitation of the Pagan Gongas, very recently in rebellion, and nearly destroyed, rather than subdued. To the first demand of safe conduct, they answered in a manner which shewed that, far from defending the travellers from others, they were resolved themselves to fall upon them, and rob or murder them in the way. One Portuguese offered himself to return with Fernandes to complain of these savages to Sela Christos; who, upon their arrival, dispatched three officers with troops to chastise these Pagans, and convey the ambassador and his attendants out of their territory and reach.

THE Gongas, being informed that a complaint was sent to Sela Christos, which would infallibly be followed by a detachment of troops, gave the ambassador the safeguard he demanded, which carried him in three days to Minè*.

This

* Which signifies the Passage.

This is the name of some miserable villages, often rebuilt, and as often destroyed, upon a ford of the Nile, over which is the ordinary passage for the Mahometan merchants into Bizamo, the way to the mountainous country of Narea and Caffa. As the rains had begun to fall here with violence, when Fernandes and his companions arrived, they were obliged to pass the river on skins blown full of wind.

THE distance from Minè to Narea is 50 leagues due south, with little inclination to west. The road to it, and the places through which you pass, are very distinctly set down in my map, and, I believe, without any material error; it is the only place where the reader can find this route, which, till now, has never been published.

THE next day our travellers entered the kingdom of Bizamo, inhabited by Pagan Galla. These people came in crowds with arms in their hands, insisting upon being paid for liberty of passing through their country; but, seeing the company of the ambassador take to their arms likewise, they compounded for a few bricks of salt and coarse cotton cloaths, and thereupon suffered them to pass. The same day, the guide, sent from Narea to conduct them by crooked and unfrequented paths out of the way of the Pagan Galla, made them to enter into a large thicket through which they could scarcely force themselves; after which they came to a river called *Maleg*, when it was nearly night. Next day they could find no ford where they could pass. They now entertained a suspicion, that the guard from Narea had betrayed them, and intended to leave them in these woods to meet their death from the Galla.

THE day after, they found the ford, and passed it without difficulty; and, being on the other side, they began to be a little more composed, as being far from the Pagans, and now near entering the territory of Narea. After ascending a high mountain, they came to Gonea, where they found a garrison under one of the principal officers of that kingdom, who received them with great marks of honour and joy, on account of the warm recommendation Sela Christos had given them, and perhaps as much for a considerable present they had brought along with them.

NAREA, the southmost province of the Abyssinian empire, is still governed by its native princes, who are called *the Beneros*; its territory reached formerly to Bizamo.

THE Galla have quite surrounded them, especially on the south-east and north. What is, to the west is a part of Africa, the most unknown. The people of Narea have a small trade with Melinda on the Indian Ocean, and with Angola on the western, by means of intermediate nations. Narea is abundantly supplied with gold from the Negro country that is nearest them. Some have, indeed, said there is gold in Narea; but, after a very diligent investigation, I find it comes chiefly from towards the Atlantic.

THE kingdom of Narea stands like a fortified place in the middle of a plain. Many rivers, rising in the fourth and fifth degrees of latitude, spread themselves, for want of level, over this flat country, and stagnate in very extensive marshes from south by east, to the point of north, or north-west.

THE foot of the mountains, or edge of these marshes nearest Narea, is thick overgrown with coffee-trees, which, if not the *only*, is the *largest* tree known there. Then comes the mountainous country of Narea Proper, which is interspersed with small, unwholesome, but very fertile valleys. Immediately adjoining is the more mountainous country of Caffa, without any level ground whatever. It is said to be governed by a separate prince: they were converted to Christianity in the time of Melec Segued, some time after the conversion of Narea. The Galla, having settled themselves in all the flat ground to the very edge of the marshes, have, in great measure, cut off the communication with Abyssinia for many years together; so that their continuance in the Christian faith seems very precarious and uncertain, for want of books and priests to instruct them.

THE Narcans of the high country are the lightest in colour of any people in Abyssinia; but those that live by the borders of the marshes below are perfect blacks, and have the features and wool of negroes: whereas all those in the high country of Narea, and still more so in the stupendous mountains of Caffa, are not so dark as Neopolitans or Sicilians. Indeed it is said that snow has been seen to lie on the mountains of Caffa, as also in that high ridge called Dyre and Tegla; but this I do not believe. Hail has probably been seen to lie there; but I doubt much whether this can be said of a substance of so loose a texture as snow.

THERE is great abundance both of cattle, grain, and all sorts of provisions in Narea, as well in the high as in the low country. Gold, which they sell by weight, is the medium of commerce within the country itself; but coarse

cotton cloths, stibium, beads, and incense, are the articles with which their foreign trade to Angola, and the kingdoms on the Atlantic, is carried on.

THE Nareans are exceedingly brave. Though they have been conquered, and driven out of the low country, it has been by multitudes—nation after nation pouring in upon them with a number of horse to which they are perfect strangers: But now, confined to the mountains, and surrounded by their marshes and woods, they despise all further attempts of the Galla, and drive them from their frontiers whenever they approach too near.

IN these skirmishes, or in small robbing parties, those Nareans are taken, whom the Mahometan merchants sell at Gondar. At Constantinople, India, or Cairo, the women are more esteemed as slaves than those of any other part of the world, and the men are reckoned faithful, active, and intelligent. Both sexes are remarkable for a chearful, kind disposition, and, if properly treated, soon attach themselves inviolably to their masters. The language of Narea and Caffa is peculiar to that country, and is not a dialect of any neighbouring nation.

ANTONIO FERNANDES in this journey, seeking to go to India by Melinda in company with Fecur Egzie ambassador, passed through this country; but none of the Jesuits ever went to Narea with a view of converting the people, at which I have been often surpris'd. There was enough of gold and ignorance to have allured them. That softness and simplicity of manners for which the Nareans are remarkable, their affection for their masters and superiors, and firm at-

achment to them, would have been great advantages in the hands of the fathers. Every Abyssinian would have encouraged them at the beginning of this mission ; and, if once they had firmly established themselves in a country of so difficult access, they might have bid defiance to prince Facilidas, and the persecution that destroyed the progress of the Catholic faith in that reign.

FROM GONEA, in six days they came to the residence of Benero, the sovereign of the country ; since the conquest and conversion under Melec Segued, he is called Shum. The ambassador and Fernandes were received by the Benero with an air of constraint and coolness, though with civility. They found afterwards the cause of this was the insinuation of a schismatic Abyssinian monk, then at the court of that prince, who had told him that the errand of the ambassador and missionary to India was to bring Portuguese troops that way into Abyssinia, which would end in the destruction of Narea, if it did not begin with it.

TERRIFIED at a danger so near, the Benero called a council, in which it was resolved that the ambassador should be turned from the direct road into the kingdom of Bali, to a much more inconvenient, longer, and dangerous one ; and, the ambassador hesitating a little when this was proposed, the Benero told him plainly, that he would not suffer him to pass further by any other way than that of Bali.

BALI was once a province belonging to Abyssinia, and was the first taken from them by the Galla. It is to the north-east of Narea, to the west of the kingdom of Adel,

which separates it from the sea ; of which ample mention has been already made in the beginning of this history.

THIS was to turn them to Cape Gardafan, the longest journey they could possibly make by land, and in the middle of their enemies ; whereas the direction of the coast of the Indian Ocean running greatly to the westward, and towards Melinda, was the shortest journey they could make by land. Melinda, too, had many rich merchants, who, though Moors, did yet traffic in the Portuguese settlements on the coast of Malabar, and had little intelligence or concern with the religious disputes which raged in Abyssinia.

HOWEVER, I very much doubt whether this nearest route could be accomplished, at least by travellers, such as Fecur Egzie, Fernandes, and their companions, all ignorant of the language, and, therefore, constantly at the discretion of interpreters, and the malice or private views of different people through whose hands they must have passed.

THE Benero, having thus provided against the dangers with which his state was threatened, if our travellers went by Melinda, made them a present of fifty crusades of gold for the necessaries of their journey ; and, as their way lay through the small state of Gingiro, and an ambassador from the sovereign of that state was then at Narea, he dispatched that minister in great haste, recommending the Portuguese to his protection so long as they should be in his territory.

FECUR EGZIE and his company set out with the ambassador of Gingiro in a direction due east ; and the first day they arrived at a post of Narea, where was the officer who was

to give them a guard to the frontiers; and who, after some delay, in order to see what he could extort from them, at last gave them a party of eighty foldiers to conduct them to the frontiers.

AFTER four long days journey through countries totally laid waste by the Galla, keeping scouts constantly before them to give advice of the first appearance of any enemy, that they might hide themselves in thickets and bushes; at mid-day they began to descend a very steep craggy ridge of mountains, when the ambassador of Gingiro, now their conductor, warned them, that, before they got to the foot of the mountain, they should enter into a very thick wood to hide themselves till night, that they might not be discovered by the Galla shepherds feeding their flocks in the plain below; for only at night, when they had retired, could those plains be passed in safety.

At four o'clock in the afternoon they began to enter the wood, and were lucky in getting a violent shower of rain, which dislodged the Galla sooner than ordinary, and sent them and their cattle home to their huts. But it was, at the same time, very disagreeable to our travellers on account of its excessive coldness. Next day, in the evening, descending another very rugged chain of mountains, they came to the banks of the large river Zebeé, as the Portuguese call it; but its true name is Kibbeé, a name given it by the Mahometan merchants, (the only travellers in this country) from its whiteness, approaching to the colour of melted butter, which that word signifies.

THE river Zebeé, or Kibbeé, surrounds a great part of the kingdom of Gingiro. It has been mistaken for the river El Aice, which runs into Egypt in a course parallel to the Nile, but to the west of it.

NAREA seems to be the highest land in the peninsula of Africa, so that here the rivers begin to run alternately towards the Cape of Good Hope and Mediterranean ; but the descent at first is very small on either side. In the adjoining latitudes, that is 4° on each side of the Line, it rains perpetually, so that these rivers, though not rapid, are yet kept continually full.

THIS of Zebeé, is universally allowed by the merchants of this country to be the head of the river Quilimancy, which, passing through such a tract of land from Narea to near Melinda, must have opened a very considerable communication with the inland country.

THIS territory, called Zindero, or Gingiro, is a very small one. The father and Fecur Egzie rested the sixth day from their setting out from Narea. The river Zebeé, by the description of Fernandes, seems to incline from its source in a greater angle than any river on the north of that partition. He says it carries more water with it than the Nile, and is infinitely more rapid, so that it would be absolutely impassable in the season of rains, were it not for large rocks which abound in its channel.

THE passage was truly tremendous; trees were laid from the shore to the next immediate rock ; from that rock to the next another tree was laid ; then another that reached

to the shore. These trees were so elastic as to bend with the weight of a single person. At a great distance below ran the foaming current of the river, so deep an abyss that it turned the heads of those who were passing on the moveable elastic support or bridge above.

YET upon this seeming inconvenience the existence of that country depended. The Galla that surrounded it would have over-run it in a month, but for this river, always rapid and always full, whose ordinary communication by a bridge could be destroyed in a moment; and which, though it had one ford, yet this was useless, unless passengers had assistance from both sides of the river, and consequently could never be of service to an enemy.

THE terrible appearance of this tottering bridge for a time stopped the ambassador and missionary. They looked upon the passing upon these trembling beams as certainly incurring inevitable destruction. But the reflection of dangers that pressed them behind overcame these fears, and they preferred the resolution to run the risk of being drowned in the river Zebeé, rather than, by staying on the other side all night, to stand the chance of being murdered by the Galla. But, after all the men only could pass the bridge, they were obliged to leave the mules on the other side till the next morning, with instructions to their people, that, upon the first appearance of the Galla, they should leave them, and make their best way over the bridge, throwing down one of the trees after them. The next morning, two peasants, subjects of Gingiro, shewed them the ford, where their beasts passed over with great difficulty and danger, but without loss.

It was necessary now to acquaint the king of Gingiro of their arrival in his kingdom, and to beg to be honoured with an audience. But he happened at that time to be employed in the more important business of conjuration and witchcraft, without which this sovereign does nothing.

THIS kingdom of Gingiro may be fixed upon as the first on this side of Africa where we meet with the strange practice of divining from the apparition of spirits, and from a direct communication with the devil: A superstition this which likewise reaches down all along the western side of this continent on the Atlantic Ocean, in the countries of Congo, Angola, and Benin. In spite of the firmest foundation in true philosophy, a traveller, who decides from the information and investigation of facts, will find it very difficult to treat these appearances as absolute fiction, or as owing to a superiority of cunning of one man in over-reaching another. For my own part, I confess I am equally at a loss to assign reasons for disbelieving the fiction on which their pretensions to some preternatural information are founded, as to account for them by the operation of ordinary causes. The king of Gingiro found eight days necessary before he could admit the ambassador and Fernandes into his presence. On the ninth, they received a permission to go to court, and they arrived there the same day.

WHEN they came into the presence of the king he was seated in a large gallery, open before, like what we call a balcony, which had steps from below on the outside, by which he ascended and descended at pleasure. When the letter which the ambassador carried was intimated to him, he came down from the gallery to receive it, a piece of respect

spect which he shewed to the king of Abyssinia, though he was neither his subject nor vassal. He inquired much after the king's health, and stood a little by the ambassador and Fernandes, speaking by an interpreter. Afterwards he again returned to his balcony, sat down there, read his letter, and then corresponded with the ambassador by messages sent from above to them below.

It is impossible to conceive from this, or any thing that Fernandes says, whether the language of Gingiro is peculiar to that country or not. The king of Gingiro read Socinios's letter, which was either in the Tigre or Arabic language. Fernandes understood the Arabic, and Fecur Egzie the Tigre and Amharic. It is not possible, then, to know what was the language of the king of Gingiro, who read and understood Socinios's letter, but spoke to Fecur Egzie by an interpreter.

At last the king of Gingiro told them, that all contained in the king of Abyssinia's letter was, that he should use them well, give them good guard and protection while they were in his country, and further them on their journey; which he said he would execute with the greatest pleasure and punctuality.

THE next day, as is usual, the ambassador and missionary carried the king's present, chints, calicoe, and other manufactures of India, things that the king esteemed most. In return to Fernandes he sent a young girl, whom the father returned, it not being customary, as he said, for a Christian priest to have girls in his company. In exchange for the girl, the good-natured king of Gingiro sent him a slave of

the other sex, and a beautiful mule. With all respect to the scruples of the father, I think it would have been fair to have kept the beautiful mule, and given the young female Gingerite to his companion in the journey, Fecur Egzie, who could have had no scruples.

FERNANDES says he received the boy from the only view of saving his soul by baptism. I wonder, since Providence had thrown the girl first in his way, by what rule of charity it was he consigned her soul to perdition by returning her, as he was not certain at the time that he might not have got a mule or camel in exchange for the girl; and then, upon his own principles, he certainly was author of the perdition of that soul which Providence seemed to have conducted by an extraordinary way to the enjoyment of all the advantages of Christianity; surely the care of Neophytes of the female sex was not a new charge to the Jesuits in Abyssinia.

It seems to be ridiculous for Fernandes to imagine that the sovereign of this little state called himself Gingiro, knowing that this word signified a monkey. His enemies might give him that name; but it is not likely he would adopt it himself. And the reason of that name is still more ridiculous; for he says it is because the gallery is like a monkey's cage. If that was the case, all the princes in Congo and Angola give their audiences in such places. Indeed, it seems to me that it is here the customs, used in these last-mentioned parts of Africa, begin, although Gingiro is nearer the coast of the Indian Ocean than that of the Atlantic. The colour of the people at Gingiro is nearly black, still it is

is not the black of a negro; the features are small and straight as in Europe or Abyssinia.

ALL matters in this state are conducted by magic; and we may see to what point the human understanding is debased in the distance of a few leagues. Let no man say that ignorance is the cause, or heat of climate, which is the unintelligible observation generally made on these occasions. For why should heat of climate addict a people to magic more than cold? or, why should ignorance enlarge a man's powers, so that, overleaping the bounds of common intelligence, it should extend his faculty of conversing with a new set of beings in another world? The Ethiopians, who nearly surround Abyssinia, are blacker than those of Gingiro, their country hotter, and are, like them, an indigenous people that have been, from the beginning, in the same part where they now inhabit. Yet the former neither adore the devil, nor pretend to have a communication with him: they have no human sacrifices, nor are there any traces of such enormities having prevailed among them. A communication with the sea has been always open, and the slave-trade prevalent from the earliest times; while the king of Gingiro, shut up in the heart of the continent, sacrifices those slaves to the devil which he has no opportunity to sell to man. For at Gingiro begins that accursed custom of making the shedding of human blood a necessary part in all solemnities. How far to the southward this reaches I do not know; but I look upon this to be the geographical bounds of the reign of the devil on the north side of the equator in the peninsula of Africa.

THIS kingdom is hereditary in one family, but does not descend in course to the eldest son, the election of the particular prince being in the nobles ; and thus far, indeed, it seems to resemble that of their neighbours in Abyssinia.

WHEN the king of Gingiro dies, the body of the deceased is wrapped in a fine cloth, and a cow is killed. They then put the body so wrapped up into the cow's skin. As soon as this is over, all the princes of the royal family fly and hide themselves in the bushes ; while others, intrusted with the election, enter into the thickets, beating everywhere about as if looking for game. At last a bird of prey, called in their country *Liber*, appears, and hovers over the person destined to be king, crying and making a great noise without quitting his station. By this means the person destined to be elected is found, surrounded, as is reported, by tigers, lions, panthers, and suchlike wild beasts. This is imagined to be done by magic, or the devil, else there are everywhere enough of these beasts lying in the cover to furnish materials for such a tale, without having recourse to the power of magic to assemble them.

As they find their king, then, like a wild beast, so his behaviour continues the same after he is found. He flies upon them with great rage, resisting to the last, wounding and killing all he can reach without any consideration, till, overcome by force, he is dragged to a throne, which he fills in a manner perfectly corresponding to the rationality of the ceremonies of his instalment.

ALTHOUGH there are many that have a right to seek after this king, yet, when he is discovered, it does not follow,

that the same person who finds him should carry him to his coronation; for there is a family who have a right to dispute this honour with the first possessor; and, therefore, in his way from the wood, they set upon the people in whose hands he is, and a battle ensues, where several are killed or wounded; and if these last, by force, can take him out of the hands of the first finder, they enjoy all the honours due to him that made him king.

BEFORE he enters his palace two men are to be slain; one at the foot of the tree by which his house is chiefly supported; the other at the threshold of his door, which is besmeared with the blood of the victim. And, it is said, (I have heard this often in Abyssinia from people coming from that country) that the particular family, whose privilege it is to be slaughtered, so far from avoiding it, glory in the occasion, and offer themselves willingly to meet it.—To return to our travellers—

THE father and the ambassador, leaving the kingdom of Gingiro, proceeded in a direction due east, and entered the kingdom of Cambat, depending still on the empire of Abyssinia, and there halted at Sangara, which seems to be the principal place of the province, governed at that time by a Moor called *Amclmal*.

ON the left of Cambat are the Guragués, who live in some beggarly villages, but mostly in caves and holes in the mountains. The father was detained two days at Sangara, at the persuasion of the inhabitants there, who told him there was a fair in the neighbourhood, and people would pass in numbers to accompany him, so that there
would

would be no danger. But, after staying that time at *Sangara*, he found that the intention of this delay was only to give time to some horsemen of the *Guragués* to assemble, in order to attack the caravan on the road, which they did soon after; and, though they were repulsed, yet it was with loss of one of the company, a young man related to *Socinius*, who, being wounded with a poisoned arrow, died some days after.

In the mean time, an Abyssinian, called *Manquer*, overtook their caravan. As he was a schismatic, his intention was very well known to be that of disappointing their journey; and he prevailed with *Amelmal* so far as to make him suspect that the recommendations which the ambassador brought were false. He, therefore, insisted on the ambassador's staying there till he should get news from court. *Amelmal*, *Manquer*, and the ambassador, each dispatched a messenger, who tarried three months on the road, and at last brought orders from the king to dispatch them immediately.

As *Amelmal* now saw the bad inclination of *Manquer*, he detained him at *Cambat* that he might occasion no more difficulties in their way. He gave the ambassador likewise seven horses, which were said to be the best presents to the princes or governors that were in his road, and dispatched the travellers with another companion, *Baharo*, who had brought the letters from the king.

From *Cambat* they entered the small territory of *Alaba*, independent of the king of Abyssinia, whose governor was called *Aliko*, a Moor. This man, already prejudiced against
the

the missionary and the ambassador, was still hesitating whether to allow them to proceed, when Manquer, who fled from Amelmal, arrived. Aliko, hearing from this incendiary, that the father's errand was to bring Portuguese that way from India to destroy the Mahometan faith, as in former times, burst into such violent rage as to threaten the father, and all with him, with death, which nothing but the reality of the king's letters, of which he had got assurance from Baharo, and some regard to the law of nations, on account of the ambassador Fecur Egzie, could have prevented. In the mean time, he put them all in close prison, where several of the Portuguese died. At last, after a council held, in which Manquer gave his voice for putting them to death, a man of superior character in that country advised the sending them back to Amelmal, the way that they came; and this measure was accordingly adopted.

THEY returned, therefore, from Cambat, and thence to Gorgora, without any sort of advantage to themselves or to us, only what arises from that opportunity of rectifying the geography of the country through which they passed; and even for this they have furnished but very scanty materials, in comparison of what we might reasonably have expected, without having occasioned any additional fatigue to themselves.

WE have already said, that though Socinios had not openly declared his resolution of embracing the Catholic faith, yet he had gone so far as to declare, upon the dispute held between the Catholic and schismatic clergy, in his own presence and that of the Abuna, that the Abyssinian:

disputants were vanquished, and ought to have been convinced from the authority of their own books, especially that of Haimanout Abou, the faith of the ancient fathers and doctors of their church received by them from the beginning as the undoubted rule of faith : That the doctrine of the Catholic church being only what was taught in the Haimanout Abou concerning the two natures in Christ, this point was to all intents and purposes settled ; and, therefore, he signified it as his will, that, for the future, no one should deny that there are two natures in Christ, distinct in themselves, but divinely united in one person, which was Christ ; declaring at the same time, that in case any person should hereafter deny, or call this in doubt, he would chastise him for seven years.

THE Abuna, on the contrary, supported by the half-brother of the king, Emana Christos, (brother to Ras Sela Christos) published a sentence of excommunication, by affixing it to the door of one of the churches belonging to the palace, in which he declared all persons accursed who should maintain two natures in Christ, or embrace or vindicate any of the errors of the church of Rome.

THE king had received various complaints of the Agows, who had abused his officers, and refused payment of tribute. He had set out upon an expedition against them, intending to winter in that country ; but, hearing of the rash conduct of the Abuna, and the leagues that were in consequence everywhere forming against him, he returned to Gorgora, and sent to the Abuna, that unless, without delay, he recalled the excommunication he had published, he should be forthwith punished with loss of his head. This language was

was too clear and explicit to admit a doubt of its meaning ; and the Abuna, giving way for the time, recalled his ex-communication.

A CONSPIRACY was next formed by Emana Christos, the eunuch Kèfla Wahad master of the household to the king, and Julius governor of Tigrè, to murder Socinios in his palace ; for which purpose they desired an audience upon weighty affairs, which being granted by the king, the three conspirators were admitted into his presence.

It was concerted that Julius should present a petition of such a nature as probably to produce a refusal ; and, in the time of the altercation that would ensue, when the king might be off his guard, the other two were to stab him.

Just before the conversation began, he was advised of his danger by a page, and Julius presenting his petition, the king granted it immediately, before Emana Christos could come up to assist in the dispute which they expected ; and this conspirator appearing in the instant, the king, who had got up to walk, invited them all three up to the terrace. This was the most favourable opportunity they could have wished. They, therefore, deferred assaulting him till they should have got up to the terrace : The king entered the door of the private stair, and drew it hastily after him. It had a spring-lock made by Peter Paez, which was fixed in the inside, and could not be opened from without, so that the king was left secure upon the terrace. Upon this the conspirators, fearing themselves discovered, retired, and from that time resolved to keep out of the king's power.

At that period, Socinios had determined upon an expedition against the Funge, that is, against the blacks of Senaar, who had entered his country in a violent manner, destroying his people, and carrying them off as slaves. It was, therefore, concerted, that while the king was busied far off with the Funge, Emana Christos, Julius, and the eunuch Kèssa, at once should attack Sela Christos, at whom, next to the king, the conspirators chiefly aimed; and the cause was, that the king had taken the posts of Ras and the government of Gojam from Emana Christos, who was a schismatic, and had given them to his younger brother, Sela Christos, a violent Catholic.

JULIUS began by a proclamation in Woggora, in which he commanded, that those who believed two natures in Christ should immediately leave the province, and that all those who were friends to the Alexandrian faith should forthwith repair to him, and fight in defence of it. He then ordered the goods of all the Catholics in Tigrè to be confiscated, and straightway marched to surprise Sela Christos then in Gojam. But the king received intelligence of his designs, and returned into Dembea before it was well known that he had left it. This, at first, very much disconcerted Julius; and the rather, that Emana Christos and Kèssa Wahad kept aloof, nor had they declared themselves openly yet, nor did they seem inclined to do it till Julius had first tried his fortune with the king.

THIS rebel, now full of presumption, advanced with his army to where the Nile issues out of the great lake Tzana; and there he found the Abuna Simon, who had staid for some weeks in one of the islands upon pretence of devotion.

Simon,

Simon, after having confirmed Julius in his resolution of murdering the king, his father-in-law, or of dying in defence of the Alexandrian faith, if necessary, persuaded him to lay aside his design of marching against Sela Christos, but rather immediately to return back and surprize the king before these two joined.

JULIUS readily adopted this advice of the Abuna ; while that priest, to shew he was sincere, offered to accompany him in person, and share his fortune. This was accepted with pleasure by Julius, who next morning received the Abuna's benediction at the head of his army, and assisted at a solemn excommunication pronounced against the king, Sela Christos, the fathers, and all the Catholics at court.

THE king's first thought, upon hearing these proceedings, was to send some troops to the assistance of Sela Christos, warning him of his danger ; but, upon hearing measures were changed, and that the first design was against himself, he marched to meet Julius, and sent a message to Sela Christos to join him with all possible speed ; and, as he was an excellent general, he took his post so judiciously that he could not be forced to fight against his will till succour was brought him, without great disadvantage to the enemy.

JULIUS, fearing the junction of Sela Christos, endeavoured to fight the two armies separately. For which purpose he advanced and pitched his camp close within sight of that of Socinios, resolving to force him to an engagement. This was thought a very dangerous measure, and was contrary to the advice of all his friends, who saw how judiciously Socinios had chosen his ground ; and it was known to the meanest

foldier on both sides, how consummate the king was in the art of war.

BUT the Abuna having persuaded him, that, as soon as the soldiers should see him, they would abandon the king and join his colours, early in the morning he put on his coat of mail, and, mounted on a strong and fiery horse, was proceeding to the king's camp, when Malacotawit, his wife, (daughter to Socinios) persuaded him at least to take some food to enable him to bear the fatigues of the day. But disdainng such advice, he only answered furiously, "That he had sworn not to taste meat till he had brought her father's head;" and, without longer waiting for the rest of his troops, he leaped over the enemy's lines in a quarter where the Abuna had promised he should be well received.

INDEED, on his first appearance, no one there opposed his passage, but seemed rather inclined to favour him as the Abuna had promised: And he had now advanced near to a body of Tigre soldiers that were the guard of the king's tent, loudly crying, "Where is your emperor?" when one of these with a stone struck him so rudely upon the forehead that it felled him to the ground; and, being now known, another soldier (called Amda) thrust him through with a sword, and thereafter killed him with many wounds. His head was cut off and carried to Socinios.

THE few that attended him perished likewise among the soldiers. Nor did any of Julius's army think of a battle, but all fought their safety by a flight. The king's troops being all fresh, pursued the scattered rebels with great vigour,

gour, and many were slain, without any loss on the part of the royalists.

THE Abuna Simon had, for a considerable time, stood as an ecclesiastic, unhurt and unheeded, among the flying troops. Being at last distinguished by his violent vociferation, and repeated imprecations upon the king and the conquerors, he was slain by a common soldier, who cut his head off and carried it to Socinios, who ordered it, with the body, to be taken from the field of battle and buried in a church-yard.

SOCINIOS gave the spoil of the camp to his soldiers. It was said, that no time, since the Turks were defeated under Mahomet Gragné, was there ever so much treasure found in a camp. The pride of Julius induced him to carry all his riches with him. They were the fruits of avarice and oppression in all the principal posts of the empire, and which in their turn he had enjoyed. They were likewise the spoils of the Catholics, newly acquired by the confiscations made since his rebellion. A great number of cattle was likewise taken, which the king distributed among the priests of the several churches, the judges, and other lay-officers. Very great rejoicings were made everywhere, in the midst of which arrived Ras Sela Christos with his army from Gojam, and was struck with astonishment on seeing the small number of troops with which the king had been exposed to fight Julius, and how complete a victory he had gained with them.

IN the mean time, Emana Christos had retired to a high mountain in Gojam, called *Melca Amba*, where he continued

to excite the people of that province to rebel and join Julius, whose arrival he daily expected, that, together, they might fight Sela Christos. But the rashness of Julius, and the march of Sela Christos to the king's assistance, had very much disconcerted their whole scheme.

AS CHRISTOS, who commanded in Gojam after the departure of Ras Sela Christos, sent to Melca Amba, "reproaching Emana Christos with seditious practices; upbraiding him with the unnatural part he acted, being a brother-german to Sela Christos, and brother to Socinios by the same mother, while Julius was married to his daughter, and had constantly enjoyed the great places of the empire. He asked him, What they could be more? Kings they could not be, neither he nor Julius. Ras, the next place in the empire, they both had enjoyed; and, if the king had taken that office lately from Emana Christos, he had not given it to a stranger, but to his brother Sela Christos, who, it was but fair, should have his turn; and that the importance of his family was not the less increased by it. Lastly, he represented the danger he ran, if Julius made his peace, of falling a sacrifice as the adviser of the rebellion."

EMANA CHRISTOS answered, "That though he rebelled with Julius, and at the same time, yet it was not as a follower of Julius, nor against the king; but that he took up arms in defence of the ancient faith of his country, which was now, without reason, trodden under foot in favour of a religion, which was a false one if they understood it, and an useless one if they did not. He said he was satisfied of his own danger; but neither his connection with the king, nor his being related to Sela Christos, could weigh with him

against his duty to God and his country. The king and his brother might be right in embracing the Romish religion, because they were convinced of the truth of it: he had used, however, the same means, and the same application, had heard the arguments of the same fathers, which, unluckily for him, had convinced him their religion was not a true, but a false one. For the same reasons he continued to be an Alexandrian, which his brother alledged had made him a Roman. He, therefore, begged Af Christos to consider, by a review of things since David III.'s time, how much blood the change would cost to the kingdom by the attempt, whether it succeeded or not; and whether, after that consideration, it was worth trying the experiment."

THIS artful and sensible message, sent by a man of the capacity and experience of Emana Christos, easily convinced Af Christos that it was not by argument Emana Christos was to be brought to his duty; but, like a good officer, he kept up correspondence with him, that he might be master of the intelligence to what place he retired.

Soon after Sela Christos had left Gojam to join the king, by forced marches he surrounded Melca Amba, where Emana Christos was, and had assembled a number of troops to descend into the plain and create a diversion in favour of Julius. The mountain had neither water in it nor food for such a number of men, nor had Emana Christos forces enough to risk a battle with an officer of the known experience of Af Christos, who had chosen the ground at his full leisure, and with complete knowledge of it.

THREE days the army within the mountain held out without complaining; but, in the evening of the third day, some monks and hermits (*holy men*, the abettors of this rebellion) came to Af Christos to remonstrate, that there were several convents and villages in the mountain, also small springs, and barley enough to answer the necessities of the ordinary inhabitants, but were not enough for such an additional number which had taken forcible possession of the wells, and drank up all the water, to the immediate danger of the whole inhabitants perishing with thirst.

To this Af Christos answered, That the reducing the mountain, and the taking Emana Christos, was what was given him in commission by the king, to attain which end he would carefully improve all the means in his power. He was sorry, indeed, for the distress of the convents in the mountain, but could not help it; nor would he suffer one of them to remove or come down into the plain, nor would he discontinue blockading the mountain while Emana Christos was there and alive. No other alternative, therefore, remained but the delivering up Emana Christos. His army would have fought for him against a common enemy, but against thirst their shields and swords were useless.

AF CHRISTOS, with his prisoner, forthwith proceeded to join the king, and passed the Nile into Begemder. At crossing the river Bathilo, they were informed of the defeat and death of Julius and the Abuna. The messenger had also letters for Emana Christos, whom the king did not know to be yet prisoner: among these was one from Scla Christos, in which he upbraided his brother with his unnatural treason, and assured him speedily of a fate like that of Julius.

Emana

Emana Christos received this intelligence almost dead with fear, for never was a prophecy made which seemed to have needed less time to accomplish than this of his brother's.

AF CHRISTOS surrendered his prisoner to the king at Dancaz, who immediately assembled a full convocation of judges of all degrees ; and the prisoner being ordered to answer to his charge concerning the rebellion of Julius and his conspiracy against the king's life, he took the part he had been advised, and palliated the whole of his actions, without positively denying any one of them, and submitted to the king's mercy. The judges, considering the defence, unanimously found him guilty of death ; but the king, whose last vote, when sitting in judgment, supercedes and overturns all the rest, reprieved, and sent him prisoner to Amhara.

HITHERTO the king had contented himself with fixing two points in favour of the Roman church, in contradiction to that of Alexandria. The first denounced punishment to every one who did not believe that there are two natures in Christ, and that he is perfect God and perfect man, without confusion of persons. The second was rather a point of discipline than of faith ; yet it was urged as such, by declaring it to be unlawful to observe Saturday, the ancient Jewish sabbath. The first of these, if it was not the cause, had been assumed as the pretext for the rebellion of Julius. The second produced that of Jonael governor of Begemder, of which we are now to speak. But thus far only the king had gone. He had not openly joined the church of Rome, nor as yet renounced that of Alexandria, nor forced any one else to do so.

THE first prelude to Jonael's rebellion was an anonymous letter written to the king, in which all the stale and lame arguments of the Alexandrians were raked together, and stated with a degree of presumption worthy of the ignorance and obstinacy of those from whom they came. This, though ridiculous, and below notice in point of argument, offended greatly both the king and the Jesuits, by the asperity of its terms, and the personal applications contained in it. The king was treated as another Dioclesian, thirsting after Christian blood, and for this devoted to hell; as were also the Jesuits, whom they called relations of Pilate, in allusion to their origin from Rome.

THE king, grievously offended, added this injunction to the former proclamation, "That all out-door work, such as plowing and sowing, should be publicly followed by the husbandman on the Saturday, under penalty of paying a web of cotton cloth, for the first omission, which cloth was to be of five shillings value; and the second offence, was to be punished by a confiscation of moveables, and the crime not to be pardoned for seven years;"—the greatest punishment for misdemeanors in Abyssinia. To this Socinios added, *vivâ voce*, from his throne, that he never *abolished*, but *explained* and *established* their religion, which always taught, as their own books could testify, that Christ was perfect God and perfect man, two distinct natures united in one hypostasis of the eternal word; neither was it in compliance with the Jesuits that he abrogated the observation of the Jewish sabbath, but in obedience to the council of Chalcedon, which was founded in the holy scriptures, for which he was ready at all times to lose his life, though he should endeavour

your first to inflict that punishment on such as were its enemies."

IN order to shew that he did not mean to trifle, he ordered the tongue of a monk (called Abba Af Christos) to be cut out, for denying the two natures in Christ; and Bucu, one of the principal generals of his court (who afterwards died a zealous Catholic) he ordered to be beaten with rods, and degraded from his employment, for observing the Jewish sabbath.

THE king, having given these public, unequivocal testimonies of his resolution, put himself at the head of his army, and marched against Jonael; but that rebel, not daring to meet his offended sovereign, retired into the mountains; whereupon the king laid waste the country of the Galla, who had protected him. This occasioned a division among the Galla themselves. One party declaring for the king, apprehended Jonael with intention to deliver him up; but he was soon rescued out of their hands by the contrary party, enemies to Socinians. His protectors being once known, the manner of working his destruction was soon known likewise. The king's presents made their way to that faithless people, the only barbarians with whom the right of hospitality is not established. Upon receiving the king's bribe, they murdered Jonael, cut his head off, and sent it to the king.

THE rebellion in Damot was not so easily quelled. Sela Christos, a zealous Catholic, was sent against the rebels to enforce the proclamation with regard to the sabbath. But as his connections were very considerable among them, he

chose first to endeavour, by fair means, to induce the ignorant savages to return to reason and obedience. With this view, he sent to expostulate with them ; and to beg that, in articles of faith, they would suffer themselves to be examined and instructed by men of learning and good life ; not by those monks, ignorant like themselves, from whom they only could learn vice, blasphemy, and rebellion. To this the Damots answered, as one man, That, if his friendship for them and good intentions were real, he should give them, for proof, the immediate burning of all the Latin books which had been translated into the Ethiopian language, and that, then, he should hang those Jesuits who were with him upon a high tree.

We are not, however, to consider this was really from a conviction or persuasion of the Damots, who inhabit a province bordering upon the Agows and Gongas, and their christianity much upon a par with that of either of these nations. But the fact was, that the fanatics and zealots for the Alexandrian faith had retired in great numbers to Damot, as to a province the worst affected to the king, from the recent violence of Julius, who, in an expedition against the Shangalla, by order of the king had driven off the cattle of the peaceable Damots, who had been then guilty of no offence. And as these were ready to rebel for a quarrel merely their own, it was very easy for the schismatical monks to add this religious grievance to the sum of the preceding.

SELA CHRISTOS had with him about 7000 men, most of them Catholics and veteran soldiers ; and among these 40 Portuguese, partly on foot, armed with musquets, the others

on horseback, clad in coats of mail. Very different was the army of Damots. They were superior in number for they exceeded 12000 men, and among these were 400 monks, well armed with fwords, lances, and shields, earnestly bent upon the obtaining a crown of martyrdom in defence of their religion, from the innovation proposed by Socinios. At the head of these was a fanatical monk (one Batacu) who promised them armies of angels, with flaming fwords, who should slay their enemies, but render them invulnerable, as he declared himself to be, either by fword or lance.

THE battle was fought at the foot of the mountains of Amid Amid, on the 6th of October 1620. Sela Christos, fure of victory, and unwilling to slaughter a people he had been used to protect, began first to shew his superiority in flight skirmishes. After which, desiring a parley, he sent messengers to them, begging them to consider their own danger, and offering them a general amnesty upon their submission. These messengers were not allowed to approach, for showers of arrows that were poured upon them; so the battle began with great animosity on both sides. The Damots were soon broken and put to flight by the superiority of Sela Christos's foldiers. But the 400 monks, already mentioned, fought most desperately in defiance of numbers, nor did they seek their safety by a flight. One hundred and eighty of them were killed on the place they occupied, valiantly fighting to the very last. A rare example, and seldom found in history, that fanatics like these, always ready to rebel, should persist and sacrifice their lives to the follies of their own preaching.

As for their celestial auxiliaries, whose assistance they were promised as far as could be discovered, they neither did harm nor good. We may suppose they stood neuter. But Batacu the hermit, ringleader of this sedition, whose body was so miraculously armed, that neither sword nor spear could make any impression upon it, was unfortunately thrust through with a lance in the very beginning of the engagement, which greatly served to discredit these supernatural aids.

It was in this year 1620, that Socinios marched into Begemder against Jonael. At which time Peter Paez was employed at Gorgora in building the church there. The king returned immediately to Dancaz after the defeat of Jonael, and passed his winter at that place.

It was on the 16th of January 1621, that the dedication of the church of Gorgora was made by Peter Paez; and at that time the king was in Begemder. Upon his return to Dancaz he met Paez at Gorgora for the first time. He remained at Gorgora till the 3d of October of that year, when the news of the defeat of the Damots by Sela Christos arrived, which he received in presence of that priest at Gorgora. In this, both the Jesuits and Abyssinian annals agree. It is not then possible that Peter Paez could have been with the king at Sacala, or Geesh, in the country of the Agows on the 21st of March 1621*; for both Peter Paez and Socinios were at that time in Gorgora.

AT

* This will be more enlarged upon hereafter.

AT this time the Ethiopic memoirs of Socinios's reign interrupted their continual topics of rebellion and bloodshed, to record a very trifling anecdote ; which, however, I insert, as it serves to give some idea of the simplicity and ignorance of those times.

THE historian says, that this year there was brought into Abyssinia, a bird called *Para*, which was about the bigness of a hen, and spoke all languages ; Indian, Portuguese, and Arabic. It named the king's name : although its voice was that of a man, it could likewise neigh like a horse, and mew like a cat, but did not sing like a bird. It was produced before the assembly of judges, of the priests, and the azages of court, and there it spoke with great gravity. The assembly, after considering circumstances well, were unanimously of opinion, that the evil spirit had no part in endowing it with these talents. But to be certain of this, it was thought most prudent to take the advice of Ras Sela Christos, then in Gojam, who might, if he thought fit, consult the superior of Mahebar Selassé ; to them it was sent, but it died on the road. The historian closes his narrative by this wise reflection on the parrot's death ; " Such is the lot of all : flesh."

The king, immediately after his victory over Jonael, had resolved to throw off the mask, and openly to profess the Catholic religion. The success of Sela Christos against the Damots had confirmed him. He had passed the rainy season, as I have before observed, between Gorgora and Dancaz ; and, in the usual time, in the month of November, marched to Foggora, a narrow stripe of plain country, reaching from Emfras to Dara, bounded on one side by the lake

Dem--

Dembea, and on the other by the mountains of Begemder.

For this purpose he sent to Peter Paez, his ordinary confessor, to come to him ; and, having told him his resolution, he declared, that, in proof of the sincerity of his conversion, he had put away all his wives (of whom he had several of the first quality, and many children by them) and retained only his first, by whom he had the eldest of his sons, destined to succeed him in the empire.

PAEZ, having received his confession, and public renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, returned to Gorgora singing his *nunc dimittis*, as if the great end of his mission was now completed ; nor was he deceived in his prognostication. For, having too much heated himself with zeal in travelling, he was, upon his arrival, taken with a violent fever ; and, tho' every sort of remedy was administered to him by Antonio Fernandes, yet he died on the third of May 1623, with great demonstrations of piety and resignation, and firm conviction, that he had done his duty in an active, innocent, and well-spent life.

He had been seven years a captive in Arabia in the hands of the Moors, and nineteen years missionary in Abyssinia, in the worst of times, and had always extricated himself from the most perilous situations, with honour to himself and advantage to his religion. In person, he was very tall and strong ; but lean from continual labour and abstinence. He was red faced ; which, Tellez says, proceeded from the religious *warmth* of his heart. He had a very good understanding,

standing, which he had cultivated, every hour of his life, by study or practice.

BESIDES possessing universal knowledge in scholastic divinity, and the books belonging to his profession, he understood Greek, Latin, and Arabic well, was a good mathematician, an excellent mechanic, wrought always with his own hands, and in building was at once a careful, active labourer, and an architect of refined taste and judgment. He was, by his own study and industry, painter, mason, carver, carpenter, smith, farrier, quarrier, and was able to build convents and palaces, and furnish them without calling one workman to his assistance; and in this manner he is said to have furnished the convent at Collala, as also the palace and convent at Gorgora.

WITH all these accomplishments, he was so affable, compassionate, and humble in his nature, that he never had opportunity of conversing, even with heretics, without leaving them his friends. He was remarkably chearful in his temper; and the most forward always in promoting innocent mirth, of that puerile species which we in England call *fun*, in great request among the young men in Abyssinia, who spend much of their time in this sort of conversation, whether in the city or the camp. Above all, he was a patient, diligent instructor of youth; and the greatest part of his disciples died in the persecution that soon followed, resolutely maintaining the truths of that religion their preceptor first had taught them. In a word, he was the hinge upon which the Catholic religion turned. He had found the seeds of it sown in the country for a hundred years before his time, which had borne little fruit, and was then apparently on

the decline. Nineteen years of this most active missionary, and the death of three kings, had advanced it only so far as to be embraced publicly by one of them; after Paez's death, in six years it fell, though supported most strenuously by a king prodigal of the blood of his subjects in this cause, by a patriarch sent from Rome, and by above 20 very zealous and active missionaries; and, as far as my foresight can carry me, it is so entirely fallen, that, unless by a special miracle of Providence wrought for that purpose, it never will rise again.

THE king's renunciation of the Alexandrian faith was followed by a very strong, or rather violent manifesto, and we need not be at a loss to guess whom he employed to draw it up. It begins by asserting the supremacy of the church of Rome, as the see of St Peter; it mentions the three first general councils, which condemned Arius, Macedonius, and Nestorius; next quotes the council of Chalcedon, as the fourth general council, as having justly condemned Dioscurus; but says not a word of the council of Ephesus, which the Abyssinians receive instead of that of Chalcedon; insists largely upon the two natures in Christ; then, leaving the patriarchs of Alexandria, it attacks not the doctrine, but the morals of the Abunas, sent from Alexandria into Abyssinia, accuses the ecclesiastics in general of simony and paying money to the Abuna for their ordination, (a well-founded part of the charge) which I fear continues to this day.

THE Abuna Marcus was, it is there said, convicted by Socinios, or Melec Segued, of a crime of such turpitude that the name of it should never stain paper. He was degraded and banished to the island of Dek. His successor Christodulus had

had many concubines. Abuna Petros, who succeeded, took the wife of a poor Egyptian, and lived with her; he then excommunicated his sovereign Jacob, after he had reigned seven years, and died in battle in the actual commission of treason, fighting against the prince.

SIMON, the last Abuna, besides living in adultery with the wife of an Egyptian called Marti, kept several young women with him as concubines; and being detected in having a daughter by one of them, with a view to conceal it, he caused the child to be exposed to be devoured by the hyæna. After living in constant disobedience to God's law, he joined the crime of rebellion to the repeated breach of every command in the decalogue; and appearing in battle, and excommunicating his sovereign, God (says the manifesto) delivered him into our victorious hands, and he was slain by a common soldier in the very commission of his crime.

It must be owned, we cannot have a worse picture of any Christian church than that here given of the bishop's church of Alexandria. Charity should induce us to hope some exaggeration had crept into it. Yet when we consider that the facts mentioned were all within the space of forty years, and consequently must have been within the knowledge, not only of Socinios, but of many people then alive and at court, we cannot, with the impartiality of an historian, deny our apprehensions, that these charges were but too-well founded.

HOWEVER this may be, neither the king's example, nor his manifesto, had the effect he desired. A rebel, whom the annals call the son of Gabriel, declared himself against the king in Amhara, just at the time that Socinios, misled by

the enemies of Sela Christos, had begun to entertain suspicion of his loyalty, and had deprived him of the government of Gojam and the Agows. Finding, after an examination, there was no person that was qualified to bring this affair to a happy issue but Sela Christos, he replaced him in his government of Gojam, giving him, at the same time, orders to march against the son of Gabriel into Amhara.

THIS command of the king, Ras Sela Christos soon complied with, and, upon his first appearance in that province, the rebel retired to a high mountain which he made his place of arms, the top producing both provisions and water sufficient to maintain a large garrison.

THE Ras, seeing that force availed nothing, had recourse to the usual trap these rebels fall into. Weary of confinement on the mountain, sensible that he was by himself too weak to leave it, while such an enemy expected him below, he accepted the friendship of the neighbouring Galla, who offered to join him in such numbers as to enable him to descend from the mountain, and try his fortune in a battle. The treaty was concluded, and the junction no sooner effected, than the faithless Galla, before gained by the Ras, fell upon the son of Gabriel with their clubs, and killed him on the spot, having so mangled his body that scarce a piece was reserved to send to his enemy.

THE joy this victory occasioned at court met with a great addition by the arrival of the Romish patriarch. It has been before observed, that the king had himself wrote letters to the pope and king of Spain, declaring his intentions to turn Catholic. Peter Pacz, Antonio Fernandes, and the other

priests, had given a much more favourable prospect of religious affairs than had as yet been conveyed to Rome; the wiser part of the conclave, however, had doubted. But now, the king had voluntarily made his recantation, it was no longer thought time for delay, and accordingly Alphonso Mendez, a Jesuit doctor of divinity, a man of great learning, by birth a Portuguese, was ordained at Lisbon the 25th of May 1624.

FROM thence he proceeded to India by the way of Goa, attended by several fresh missionaries; and finding there letters from Socinios, and a passport from the king of Dancali, a Mahometan prince in alliance with the Abyssinians, he arrived at Bilur, an open bay in the small and barren state of Dancali, on the second of May 1625, and was received, by the brother of the reigning prince, with every token of friendship that so poor a state and sovereign could afford; the king of Dancali himself was at the distance of six days journey, in a place where there was greater plenty of water and provisions. The following day the king sent four mules for the fathers to join him, and received them in a room of a round figure, surrounded and covered with bundles of straw, but so low they scarce could raise themselves after having made their bows.

IN this miserable kingdom, which I shall not describe, as, since that period, it has been conquered by the Galla, the patriarch and fathers staid almost in want of necessaries for sixteen days. At last they set out, having, with much difficulty, mustered sufficient beasts of burden to carry their baggage. The road lay through part of the country wherein are the mines of fossile-salt, hot, barren, and absolutely
without

without water, and exposed greatly to the incursions of the Galla. After two days journey, they arrived in the morning of the third, at the foot of Senaffé, where there was water. It is the frontier (as the name imports) of the province of Enderta, now united to the government of Tigré. It is part of that ridge of mountains which separates the seasons, occasioning summer on the one side, while rain and cold prevail on the other.

ON the night before they came to the mountain, while dubious of their way, a star of more than ordinary magnitude, and of surprising brightness, appeared over the patriarch, giving so strong a light that it illuminated the heavens down to the horizon. It was not, in its place or manner of appearing, like a common star, but stood stationary, in the way leading to Senaffé, for above six minutes, and disappeared*. This star, the patriarch and his followers modestly say, was probably the same that conducted the Magi to the cradle of Christ, and was now sent to shew them the way into Abyssinia.

WHILE they were at the foot of this mountain, the Muleteers, all Mahometans, thought the occasion a proper one to plunder them, by obliging them to pay an additional hire for their beasts, which they pretended were not able to ascend so steep a mountain. The camels certainly could not pass; but mules and asses have a more practicable road, for the sake of carrying the salt. They insisted to leave the company till they should bring them fresh mules. The caravan consisted of the patriarch and six ecclesiastics, priests, and friars, and thirteen laymen, three of whom were musicians.

* Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 38.

eians. It was very probably their intention to have sent to them people who would very soon have put a fatal period to the mission, had not Emanuel Baradas, with a number of Abyssinians, and officers, and plenty of all things necessary, joined the patriarch on the 16th of June 1625; while their late conductors, conscious of misbehaviour, fled without seeking their hire.

In five days they came to Fremona, where they staid till November; and, in December, arrived at Gorgora, where they were introduced to the king in his palace. Socinius ordered the patriarch to be placed on a seat equal in height to his own, on his right hand; and at that very audience, which was on the 11th of February 1626, it was settled that the king should take an oath of submission to the see of Rome.

THIS useless, vain, ridiculous ceremony, was accordingly celebrated on the 11th of February, with all the pageantry of a heathen festival or triumph. The palace was adorned with all the pomp and vanity that the church of Rome, and especially that part of it, the Order of the Jesuits, had solemnly abjured. The patriarch, as a mark of his superiority over the Abunas, preached a sermon in the Portuguese language upon the primacy of the chair of St Peter, full of Latin quotations, which is said to have had a wonderful effect upon the king and Selu Christos, neither of whom understood one word either of Latin or Portuguese.

THAT part of the patriarch's discourse, which was applicable to Socinius's conversion, was answered by Melca Christos, governor of Samen, (himself a schismatic) in the language of Amhara, which neither the patriarch nor his re-

tinue understood, and concluded with these words, "That as the king thought himself obliged to fulfil those promises of submitting himself to the see of Rome which his predecessors had made, the time was now come in which he should do that, if such was his pleasure. These last words of the orator seem not to have satisfied the zeal of Socinios. He interrupted Melca Christos by saying, that it was not now, but a long time since, that he had submitted to the church of Rome, as true successor of St Peter; and the present occasion was only a confirmation of what he had formerly professed."

THE patriarch answered by a few words, prudently and sensibly, I suppose to save time, seeing that, short or long, his discourse would not be understood. But proceeding to facts, he opened a new testament, while Socinios, upon his knees, took the following oath: "We, sultan Segued, emperor of Ethiopia, do believe and confess that St Peter, prince of the apostles, was constituted, by Christ our Lord, head of the whole Christian church, and that he gave him the principality and dominion over the whole world, by saying to him, *You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And again when he said, *Keep my sheep.* Also we believe and confess, that the pope of Rome, lawfully elected, is the true successor of St Peter the apostle, in government; that he holdeth the same power, dignity, and primacy, in the whole Christian church: and to the holy father Urban VIII. of that name, by the mercy of God, pope, and our lord, and to his successor in the government of the church, we do promise, offer, and swear true obedience, and subject, with humility at his feet, our person and empire: so help us God and these holy gospels

gospels before us.”—After this, each man swore personal obedience, officers, priests, and monks, according to their several orders or conditions.

THE prince royal Facilidas, purely and simply in the form prescribed, took this oath, without any addition or alteration. But Ras Sela Christos, heated with zeal, after repeating the formula, drawing his sword in violent passion, uttered these words, “What has passed let it be past; but, from this day forward, he that falls from his duty this shall be his judge*.”

THIS hasty speech, not well understood, was thought by some to reflect on those he had discovered to be in the confederacy with the rebel son of Gabriël. As the court was full of parties and discontent, every one applied the threat to himself, and all joined in a league to undo Sela Christos, who had so wantonly declared himself the leader and champion of persecution.

To this oath of obedience to the pope, he likewise added one to the king, and to the prince his successor, Facilidas, with a strange clause, or qualification, which made what he said formerly still worse:—“I likewise swear to the prince, as heir of his father in this empire, as long as he shall hold favour, and defend the holy Catholic faith; and if he shall fail in this, I hereby swear to be his greatest enemy.” This extravagant addition he insisted should be imposed upon all the officers of state, and of the army then at court, and

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therefore

* It is apparently a speech in a passion, for this Sela Christos was one of the most learned of the Abyssinians; yet the words themselves, if literally translated, are scarcely intelligible.

therefore did most deservedly feel his own condemnation and punishment, which overtook him in the end, though it did not follow till long afterwards.

To these violent proceedings were added others still more violent. A solemn excommunication was pronounced against all such as did not keep that oath, and a proclamation was forthwith made, "That all people, in the line of being ordained priests, should first embrace the Catholic religion upon pain of death; that all should observe the form of the church of Rome in the celebration of Easter and Lent, under the same penalty; and with that the ceremonies of the day ended.

*Tempus erit cum magno optaverit emptum,
Intactum Pallanta.*

It was a day ever to be marked with black, not only in the annals of Ethiopia, but in those of Rome.

ALTHOUGH the arrival of the patriarch at Bilur had been happily effected, both as to himself and those that attended him, it was not so with some of his brethren sent to assist him in that mission. Two Jesuits, Francisco Machado and Bernard Pereira, had received the king's letters in India for their safe conduct to Bilur in Dancali. Whether by malice, or inadvertency, the king's secretary, instead of Bilur, had mentioned Zeyla in the letter.

ZEYLA, an island belonging to the king of Adel, was of all other places that where the people were most inveterate against the Catholic religion. No sooner did the Shekh know the

the quality and errand of these missionaries, than he confined them to close prison, where, after great suffering, they were both put to death ; and, to aggravate this, a letter was written to Socinios stigmatizing him with the name of apostate from the religion of his forefathers, and applying to him many opprobrious names.

THIS letter, at another time, would not have failed to have been followed by the chastisement it deserved. But Adel, formerly a flourishing and commercial kingdom, was now fallen, and reduced to a multitude of banditti. Trade had left it. A garrison of nominal janizaries, since the reign of Sultan Selim, had kept the little island of Zeyla for the pretended purpose of a customhouse ; but, in fact, it was a post of robbers, who only maintained themselves there for the sake of plundering merchants who came by sea ; while the Galla poured in numbers upon the prince from the continent, and of the ancient kingdom of Adel, had left him nothing but Auffa the capital, a town situated upon a rock, on the banks of the river Hawash, Azab, and Raheeta, and a few other miserable villages upon the sea ; and even part of these were daily falling into the hands of that enemy, destined very soon to over-run them all. This abject state to which they had been reduced, we may suppose, was the only reason that protected them from the vengeance of a high-spirited prince, such as Socinios certainly was.

THIS violent conduct of Socinios in his abjuration was followed by that of the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, perfectly in the same spirit. The clergy were re-ordained, their churches consecrated anew, grown men as well as children again baptised, the moveable feasts and festivals reduced to

the forms and times of the church of Rome ; circumcision, polygamy, and divorce were abrogated for ever ; and the many questions that thereupon arose, and which were understood to belong to the civil judge, the patriarch called to his own tribunal exclusively.

ALL the tenets of the church of Alexandria, whether of faith or discipline, were rejected ; and it was not known how far the patriarch intended to subject the civil jurisdiction of the judges to the ecclesiastical power. Two steps that he took, the one immediately after the other, seemed to give great reason of fear upon this head.

IN order to understand the first of these cases, it will be necessary to know, that it is a fundamental constitution of the monarchy of Ethiopia, that all lands belong to the king ; and that there is no such thing as church-lands in this country. Those that the king has given for the maintenance of churches or monasteries are resumed every day, at the instance of, and for the convenience of individuals, and new ones granted in their stead sometimes of a greater value, sometimes of a less. Nor have the priests or monks any property in these lands. A lay-officer, appointed by the king, divides to each monk or priest, his quota of the revenue, applying any overplus to other uses, which is, we may suppose, often putting it into his own pocket.

THERE was a nobleman of great distinction for his family and rank at court, for his age, and the merit of his service ; he had occupied some of the lands belonging to a monk who happened to be a Catholic. This man, had he been an Alexandrian, could have had no recourse to the Abuna his patri-

patriarch, and the cause must have been tried before the civil judge. But Mendes was of another opinion. He ordered the nobleman to make his defence before the ecclesiastical tribunal; and, upon his refusing this as a novelty to which he was not bound, he condemned him immediately to restore the lands to the monk. This, too, was refused on the part of the present possessor, who being one day attending the king at church, the patriarch, without preamble, pronounced against him a formal sentence of excommunication, by which he gave him over, soul and body, to the devil.

SUCH procedure was, till then, unknown in Abyssinia. The nobleman, though otherwise brave, was so much affected with the terms of his sentence as to faint, imagining himself already in the clutches of Satan, and it was with difficulty he was recovered, the king making intercession with the patriarch to take off this censure, or rather this curse.

SUDDEN as it was, however, in the inflicting, and easy in the removal, it made very lasting and serious impressions on the minds of men of all ranks, greatly to the disadvantage of the patriarch and the professors of his new religion, in the exercise of which they did not discover that degree of charity, meekness, mercy, and long-suffering, that they had been taught were the very essentials of it.

THE next instance was this: There had been an Itchegué, that is, the superior of the monks of Debra Libanos, an Order instituted by Abba Tecla Haimanout, the last Abyssinian Abuna, not more celebrated by the church than the state,

as being the restorer of the line of Solomon, for many years banished to Shoa ; and this superior, besides the dignity of his office, was remarkable for an innocent, pious, and holy life. It happened that a Catholic monk officiated in a church where this Itcheguè had been buried under the altar ; the patriarch declared the church defiled by the burial of that heretic and schismatic, and suspended the celebration of divine service till the body was raised and thrown out of the church in a most indecent manner. Universal discontent seized the minds of all men ; and, from that time, it seemed the friends of the old religion began again to recover strength, and the Catholics to be looked upon, if not with hatred, yet with terror. And every trifle now contributed towards the one or the other.

THE Jesuits, following practices or customs of their own, had thought fit to exhibit a kind of religious plays or farces. The devil in these pieces is always the buffoon ; he plays harlequin and flight-of-hand tricks, fires squibs and gun-powder, very little consistent with the decency of the other persons who compose the drama. This continued to be practised in several Catholic countries in Europe, while that learned company existed*. It happened to be necessary to introduce figures of this kind blacked all over, and in masks, with cloven feet, &c. The first exhibition of these figures so surprised and terrified the Abyssinian audience, that they fled immediately upon their appearance, crying out, Alas ! alas ! these Franks have brought devils into our country with them !

THIS

* I have seen them often at Madrid.

THIS great extension of civil jurisdiction, and the large strides it took to annihilate the civil power, the encroachments it made upon the prerogative of the king, till now supreme in all causes ecclesiastical and civil, the more than regal, the more, if possible, than papal pride of the patriarch, began to be felt universally, and it was seen to be intended to lessen every order of government, from the king to the lowest officer in the province. From this time, therefore, we date the decline of the Catholic interest in Abyssinia. The first blow was given it by the king himself, not with a view to destroy it, for he was a sincere Catholic upon principle, but to controul and keep it within some bounds, as he found there was no order could otherwise be maintained.

HE desired the patriarch to permit the use of the ancient liturgies of Ethiopia, altered by himself in every thing where they did not agree with that of the church of Rome. With this the patriarch was obliged to comply, because there was in it an appearance of reason that men should pray to God in a language that they understood, and which was their own, rather than a foreign tongue of which they did not understand one word. This was thought so obvious in Ethiopia as not to admit any doubt. But the order and practice of the church of Rome was just the contrary; and this wound was a mortal one; for no sooner was the permission given to use their own liturgies, than all the Abyssinians embraced them to a man, and went on in their old prayers and services without any of the patriarch's alterations.

To these events, not important in themselves, but only from the effect they had upon the minds of mankind, succeeded tragedies of a more serious nature. I have already observed, in speaking of the Galla, that they were divided into three principal divisions, those on the east of Abyssinia were called Bertuma Galla, those on the south called Toluma, and those on the west Boren Galla; each of these were divided into seven, and these again subdivided into a number of tribes. Each of these seven nations choose a king once in seven years called Lubo; and it is usually the first act of the new king's reign to over-run the neighbouring provinces of Abyssinia, laying every thing waste with fire and sword for this year, even if they had no provocation, but had been at peace for several years before.

THE Abyssinians remained long in ignorance of this cause of these invasions, and, while that was the case, they could take no measures to be prepared against, and resist them. But after, when the customs of the Galla were better known, their periodical invasions were watched and provided against, so that though they were still continued, they were generally repelled with the slaughter and defeat of the invaders.

It happened that the present year, 1627, was the season of electing the king, and of the invasion. Though the time of the expedition was known, no intelligence had been given of the manner in which it was to be executed. In past times, the nations, or tribes of Galla, assaulted each the opposite province in whose frontiers they were settled; but this year it was agreed among them to choose one province, Gojam, which, by uniting their whole force, they
were

were to devote to destruction, or, if possible, keep possession of it.

Buco was governor of Gojam ; the king had sent Sela Christos to his assistance, and was intending to follow with another army himself. In the mean time, the passes through which the Galla used to enter were all lined with men, and every preparation made to receive them.

THESE barbarians advanced to the Nile in multitudes never seen before ; and, finding the province perfectly on its guard, they feigned a panic, or disagreement among themselves, retired in seeming confusion, and dispersed, some, as it was said, to their own homes, and some to an expedition against Narea. This in reality had often happened ; but now it was only a stratagem ; for they all assembled in their own country Bizamo, of which the Abyssinians had no intelligence. Bucu, thinking he was free of them for that year, disbanded his troops, or detached them to other services ; Sela Christos did the same ; neither did Socinios advance with his army.

IN that interval of weakness, news were sent to Bucu that the Galla had passed the Nile. Upon which he advanced with 1000 foot and 200 horse, believing that it was some small part of that army which he thought had some time before been dispersed. After hearing mass with great devotion, and receiving the sacrament, in passing through a thick wood he was assaulted by the Galla. Being a man, brave in his own person, and exceedingly well-trained to arms, he fought so successfully, and so encouraged his men by his example, that he cut that body of Galla en-

tirely to pieces ; and, as he thought the whole matter then at an end, he ordered his drums to beat, and his trumpets to sound, in token of victory.

THE rest of the Galla, who were now dispersed through the province, but at no great distance, burning and destroying, as their custom is, and who left this body behind them only to secure their retreat across the river, returned all to their colours, upon hearing the drums and trumpets of Kaf-mati Bucu, whom they did not know to be so near ; and, as soon as he came in sight, despising his small number, they surrounded them on every side. Bucu immediately saw that he was a lost man ; but, considering the multitude of the enemy, and the unprepared state of the province, he thought his own life and those of his followers could not be better employed than by obstinately fighting to disable the enemy, so as to put it out of their power to pursue the ruin of the country farther ; throwing himself furiously into the thickest of the Galla, he, at first onset, killed four of the most forward of their leaders, and made himself a lane through the troops opposing him ; and he was now got without their circle, when some of his officers seeing him, cried to him to make the best of his way, as affairs were desperate, and not to add by his death to the misfortunes of that day.

UPON this he paused, as recollecting himself for a moment ; but, disdaining to survive the loss of his army, he *threw himself again among the Galla*, where his men were

continued the fight with the same degree of courage, till the Galla, who did not dare to approach him near, killed him by a number of javelins thrown at a distance.

THE news of the defeat and death of Buco reached Sela Christos, then in march to join him; nor did the misfortune that had already happened, nor the bad prospect of his own situation, alter his resolution of attacking the enemy: But he first wrote to the king his brother, telling him his situation, and the probable consequences of doing his duty as he had determined, laying all the blame upon the malice of his enemies, who, to gratify their own private malice, had left him without assistance, and occasioned misfortunes so detrimental to the common-weal.

SELA CHRISTOS passed this night upon a rising ground, and in the morning early descended into the plain, with a view of attacking the Galla, when, to his great surprise, that barbarous people, content with the slaughter of Kasmati Buco and his army, and not willing to risk a large quantity of plunder with which their whole army was loaded, had repassed the Nile, and returned home.

TECLA GEORGIS was son-in-law to Socinios, and then governor of Tigré, but at variance with his father-in-law upon some quarrel with his wife. Determined on this account to rebel, he associated with some noblemen of the first rank and power in Tigré, particularly Guebra Mariam and John Akayo, declaring to them, that he would no longer suffer the Roman religion, but defend the ancient church of Alexandria to the utmost of his power. And, to convince all the Abyssinians of his sincerity, he tore off the figures of crucifixes

crucifixes, and all church-ornaments and images of saints that were in relief, and burned them publicly, to make his reconciliation with the king impossible. He then called before him Abba Jacob his Catholic chaplain, and, having stripped him of his pontificals, killed him with his own hand. There was no method he could devise of bringing his quarrel sooner to an issue than this which he had adopted. But he did not seem to have taken equal pains to provide for his defence, as he had done to give provocation.

SocINIOS, upon the first intelligence of this murder and treason, ordered Keba Christos to march against him with the troops that he had at hand. This general, equally a good foldier, subject, and Catholic, being convinced of the necessity of punishing speedily so monstrous a crime, passed by forced marches through Siré to Axum, thence to Fremona; and, having appointed Gaspar Paez to meet him there, he confessed himself, and received the sacrament from that Jesuit's hands. From Fremona he continued with the same speed, making three ordinary days marches in one, being desirous of preventing the possibility of Tecla Georgis's collecting troops, and taking refuge on a mountain called *Masba*, which he heard to be his design.

It was the 12th of December 1628 that news were brought him of the situation of the enemy; upon which he ordered his baggage to be left behind, and every foldier to carry two loaves, and to march without resting till he came up with Tecla Georgis.

In the morning of the day following, two horsemen, on the scout before him, discovered five of the rebel foldiers
upon

upon the look-out likewise. These, upon seeing Keba Christos's horsemen, returned immediately to their master, and told him that they had seen armed men, and conceived them to be the soldiers of Keba Christos. To this intelligence Tecla Georgis answered, That Keba Christos was in the king's palace at Dancaz the 15th of November, and that it was impossible he then could be so near with an army, if he had even wings to fly; but that the men they had seen were probably reinforcements that he expected.

KEBA CHRISTOS, on the contrary, hearing that the enemy was at hand, drew up his army in three divisions. The first consisted of his own household, the second of a body of horse of the king's household, called *the Koccob Horse*, or *Star Cavalry*, from a silver star which each of them wears on the front of his helmet; and the third, of the people of Tigré who had joined him. In this order he came in sight of his enemy posted upon a small height, divided only from him by a narrow plain. Tecla Georgis, convinced now that it was Keba Christos, formed his army into two divisions; the one composed of a body called *Tcheraguas*, the other of a body called *Sulten ba Christos*; with these was a large corps of Galla which had lately joined them

KEBA CHRISTOS, now turning to his troops, briefly said, "My children, I will not waste my time nor yours in discourse, or in telling you what you are to do. You have all arms in your hands; you are good Christians; and I can positively assure you there is not before you one of your enemies that is not also an enemy to Christ." Then, placing himself before the Koccob horse, he pulled off his helmet and gave it to his servant, saying, "By my naked face you shall

shall know me to-day, that I am not going in the midst of you as general or commander, but foot for foot along with you like a common foldier."

UPON having uncovered his head, he was quickly known by Tecla Georgis, from whose troops a number of muskets was fired at him. But this had so little effect upon this gallant officer, that, changing his place, (which then was at the head of the second division) he placed himself still nearer the enemy in the front of his own household troops, which were the first; and the Galla charging them in that instant, he slew their leader with his own hand. Upon the death of their commander, these barbarians immediately fled, as is their custom, while Keba Christos endeavoured to make his way to where Tecla Georgis was employed keeping his troops from following so bad an example. But so soon as that rebel saw his enemy approach him, he and his whole army joined the Galla in their flight; tho' he narrowly escaped, by the swiftness of his horse, a light javelin, thrown by Keba Christos, which struck him behind, but so feebly, by reason of the distance, that it did not pierce his armour.

THE king's troops pursued vigorously, and soon brought to their general the mule, the sword, and helmet of Tecla Georgis, with the heads of 300 slain in the battle, most of them Gallas, and with them 12 heads of the most turbulent rebellious monks of Tigré. With these they also brought Adera, sister to Tecla Georgis, wounded in the throat, who had instigated him very strongly to commit the violences against the professors of the Catholic religion. Tafa, too, his master of the household, was taken prisoner; and it being made known to Keba Christos that this man had as-

sifted at the murder of Abba Jacob, he ordered him directly to be put to death.

TECLA GEORGIS, aided by the strength of his horse and knowledge of the country, escaped and concealed himself from his pursuers for four days ; but, on the Saturday that followed the victory, he was found in a cavern with his great confidants, Woldo Mariam, and a schismatic monk whose name was Sebo Amlac. Tecla Georgis was carried alive to Keba Christos, who sent him to the king, his two companions being slain as soon as found, and their heads accompanied their living master, which, on their arrival at Dancaz, the king ordered to be hung upon a tree.

TECLA GEORGIS being convicted of sacrilege as well as murder, having burnt the crucifixes and images of the saints, was condemned to be burnt alive, and a lime-kiln was immediately prepared in which he was to suffer. Upon hearing this, he desired a Catholic confessor, as wishing to be reconciled to the church of Rome, and for this purpose he sent a request to the patriarch, who was at three leagues distance, and who dispatched Antonio Fernandes with full powers to absolve from all manner of sins, and at the same time gave him orders to intercede strongly with the king to pardon the criminal. Tecla Georgis confessed publicly at the door of the church, and abjured the errors of the church of Alexandria.

AFTER this, the father Fernandes applied to the king, pleading strongly for his pardon. To which the king answered, " Many reasons there are why I should desire to pardon Tecla Georgis. To say no more, he has been married.

ried to two of my daughters, and he has by them two sons, both good soldiers and horsemen, who actually ride before me, and accompany me in battle. I have therefore pardoned him all the affronts and injuries he has done to me. But, were I to take upon myself to pardon the affronts and insults he has offered the Divine Majesty, I should turn the punishment of his sins upon myself, my family, and kingdom; and, therefore, I refuse your petition, and order you to return forthwith to Gorgora."

AFTER the departure of the father, in consideration that Tecla Georgis had again embraced the Catholic religion, the king altered his sentence of being burnt, into that of being hanged privately in the house where he was then in prison; and, for that purpose, the executioner had brought with him the cord with which Tecla had ordered the feet of Abba Jacob to be tied. No sooner did he perceive that there were no hopes of pardon, by their beginning to tie his hands, than he again, with a loud voice, renounced his confession, declaring that he died an Alexandrian, and that there was but one nature in Christ. The executioner endeavoured to stop his further blasphemies, by drawing him up on the beam in the room; but he resisted so strongly, that there was time to inform Socinios of his abjuration: upon which the king ordered that he should be hanged publicly upon a pine-tree; and he was accordingly taken down, half-strangled, from the beam in the house, and hung upon the tree before the palace.

ADERA, his sister, was next examined; and it being clearly proved that she had been a very active agent in the murder of Abba Jacob, she likewise was condemned to be hanged

ed upon the same tree with her brother, fifteen days afterwards.

ALL that interval, the queen and ladies at court employed their utmost interest with the king to pardon Adera, for they looked upon it as a disgraceful thing, both to their sex and quality, that a woman of her family should be thus publicly executed. All the ladies of the court having joined, therefore, in a public petition to the king while on his throne, he is said to have answered them by the following short parable:—

“ THERE was once an old woman, who being told of the death of an infant, said, with great indifference, Children are but tender; it is no wonder that they die, for any thing will kill a child. Being told of a youth dying, she observed, Young people are forward and rash; they are always in the way of some disaster; no wonder they die; it is impossible it should be otherwise. But being told an old woman was dead, she began to tear her hair, and lament, crying, Now the world is at an end if old women begin to die, fearing that her turn might be the next. In this manner all of you have seen Tecla Georgis die, and also several of his companions, and you have not said a word. But now it is come to the hanging of one woman, you are all alarmed, and the world is at an end. Do not then deceive yourselves, but be assured that the same cord which tied the feet of Abba Jacob, still remains sufficient to hang that slow Adera, and all those that shall be so wicked as to behave like her, to the disgrace of your sex, and their own rank and quality.”

THE effects of these ostentatious acts of reformation soon produced consequences which troubled their joy. The Agows of Lafta, called Tcheratz Agow, who live at the head of the Tacazzè, rebelled. The country they occupy is not extensive, but exceedingly populous, and was supposed at that time to be able to bring into the field above 50,000 fighting men, besides leaving behind a sufficient number to defend the passes and strong-holds of their country, which are by much the most difficult and inaccessible of any in Abyssinia. They are divided into five clans, Waag, Tettera, Dehaanah, Gouliou, and Louta, each having an independent chief. They are exceedingly warlike; and, though the country be so rude and rocky, they have a considerable number of good horses; and are in general reckoned among the bravest and most barbarous foldiers in Abyssinia. Their province abounds with all sorts of provisions, and they rarely can be forced to pay any thing to government in the name of tax, or tribute.

TECLA GEORGIS was now dead, but the cause of the rebellion still subsisted. While governor of Begemder, he had connived at many abuses of his officers who occupied the posts nearest to Lafta. These being young men, from wantonness only, without provocation, had made many different inroads, driving away cattle, and committing many other excesses. The Agows carried their complaints to the governor, who, far from hearing or redressing their wrongs, justified the conduct of his officers, by making inroads himself immediately after; but coming to an action in person with that people, he was shamefully beat, and a great part of his army left dead upon the field.

THIS misfortune very much affected Socinios. Nor did the Agows themselves doubt, but that a speedy chastisement was to follow this victory over Tecla Georgis.

THERE was a youth descended of the royal family, who, to preserve the freedom of his person, lived among the Galla, in expectation of better times. His name was Melca Christos. To him the Agows applied, that, with this prince of the house of Solomon at their head, they might wipe off the odium of being reputed rebels, and appear as fighting under a lawful sovereign for reformation of abuses. The renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, forcibly obtruded upon them by Socinios, served as cause of complaint. The Roman Catholic writers in the history of this mission, say this was but a pretext, in which I conceive they are right. I have lived among the Agows of Lafta, and in intimacy with many of them, who are not, to this day, so anxious about Christianity as to ascend one of their hills for the difference between that and Paganism; and I am satisfied, for these 300 years last past there has been scarcely a common layman in Lafta that has known the distinction between the Alexandrian and the Roman church.

IN the beginning of February 1629 the king marched from Dancaz towards Gojam, where he collected an army of 30,000 men, which, with the baggage, servants, and attendants, at that time very great and numerous, amounted to above 80,000 men.

SOCINIOS detached a number of small parties to enter Lafta at different places. On the other hand, Melca Christos assembled his troops on the most inaccessible rocks; whence,

when he spied occasion, he came suddenly down and surprised the enemy below. Among all the rude, high, and tremendous mountains of which this country consists, there is one especially, called by the name of *Lafta*. It is in the territory of Waag, strongly furrounded with inaccessible precipices, having a large plain on the top, abounding with every thing necessary, and watered by a fine stream that never fails.

THE manner in which the Agows remained secure in this strong post was misconstrued into fear by the king's army, which, in two divisions, advanced to the attack of the mountain. That on the right had with some difficulty scrambled up without opposition; but, being now arrived to the steep part of the rock, such a number of large stones was rolled down upon them from above, that this division of the army was entirely destroyed. The number of stones on the brink of the precipices was inexhaustible; and, once put in motion, pursued the scattered troops with unavoidable speed, even down to the plains below. Among the slain was Guebra Chrisfos, the king's son-in-law, dashed to pieces by the fragment of a rock. The left division was upon the point of suffering the same misfortune, had not Keba Chrisfos come to their relief and drawn them off, just before the enemy had begun to discharge this irresistible artillery against them.

THE king, thus shamefully beaten, retired to Dancaz, leaving the entrances from *Lafta* strongly defended, lest their mountaineers should, by way of retaliation, fall upon the province of Begemder. But the late ill-fortune had dispirited the troops, and caused an indifference about duty. a

want of obedience, and a relaxation in discipline in the whole army. Each of the detachments, therefore, one after the other, left their post from different excuses, and returned home. The bad consequence of this was now experienced. The Agows entered Begemder spreading desolation everywhere. Melca Christos, no longer sculking among the rocks of Lafta, planted his standard upon the plain, within five days march of the capital where the king was residing.

THE jealousies that had arisen between Socinios and his brother-in-law Sela Christos, had been so much aggravated since the oath administered by the patriarch, that the king had again deprived him of Gojam, suffering him to live in obscurity in Damot, and among the Agows, occupied, as the Jesuits say, in the conversion of that Pagan people, by destroying their idols, which they represent to be a species of cane or bamboo *, and in forbidding the ceremonies of adoration and devotion, which at stated times they paid to the river.

No remedy could be proposed, but the presence of Sela Christos, who, upon the first warning, joined the king, and coming suddenly upon the army of Lafta occupied in laying waste the low country of Begemder, gave them such an overthrow that sufficiently compensated the first loss of the king, and forced them again to take refuge among their strong-holds in Lafta.

A MIS-

A MISFORTUNE of another kind followed this victory: Laeca Mariam, a near relation to the king, was appointed governor of Begemder; but no sooner did he see himself vested with that government, than he meditated shaking off his allegiance to Socinios.

THE king, after his last battle with the Agows, had named his son Facilidas commander in chief of his forces; and, to secure him a powerful and able assistant, he had first restored Sela Christos to his government of Gojam, then sent him with an army to join Facilidas, and command under him.

THE success was answerable to the prudence of the measure; for, immediately upon their arrival, they obliged Laeca Mariam to seek for refuge in the mountains of Amhara, and, without giving him time to recollect himself there, forced their way to the mountain to which he had retired, and from which he and his followers had no way to escape, but by venturing down a steep precipice; in attempting this, Laeca Mariam fell, and was dashed to pieces, as were many others of his followers; the rest were slain by the army that pursued them.

At this time, Facilidas began to attract the eyes of the nation in general. Besides personal bravery, he had shewn great military talents in the former campaign of Lasta. Though young, he was in capacity and resolution equal to his father, but less warm, more reserved in his temper and discourse. He was thought to be an enemy to the Catholic religion, because he did not promote it, and neither exceeded nor fell short of what his father commanded him. Yet,

he lived with the Jesuits on such an even footing, that they confess they did not know whether he was their friend or enemy : he kept one of their number, called Father Angelis, constantly in his household, where he was much favoured, and constantly in his presence. He was thought to be an enemy to Sela Christos, though he never had shewn it.

FACILIDAS received a flattering message from Urban VIII. but did not answer it ; nor does it appear his father ever desired him ; for, through the whole course of the life of Sonios, as his enemies are forced to confess, he paid to his father's will, the most passive obedience in every thing. The tyranny, however, of church-government began to appear unmasked ; and it is probable that the king, though resolved to die a Roman Catholic from principles of conscience, was indifferent about forging for his son the chains he had himself worn with pain.

HOWEVER this may be, the last step of placing Facilidas at the head of the army was construed as another stroke of humiliation to the Catholics, especially as it was followed with the removal of Keba Christos (the support of that religion) from court, where he had been appointed Billetana Gueta. It is true he was removed by what, in other times, would have been called preferment ; but things had now changed their qualities, and places were not estimated, as formerly, by the consequence they gave in the empire, but by the opportunities they afforded of constant access to the king, and occasion of joining in councils with him, and defeating those of their enemies.

KEBA CHRISTOS being sent governor to Tigré, was to enter Lasta from that quarter on the N. E. He is said to have received his appointment with a great degree of concern, and to have told his friends, that he foresaw he never was to return from that expedition, which he did not regret, because he was convinced, by living much longer, it would be made his duty to assist at the fall of the Catholic religion.

AFTER having performed his devotions at Fremona, this general advanced through Gouliou, a territory mostly inhabited by Galla, and destitute of any sort of provisions; after which he took possession of the mountains of Lasta, with a view to cover the march of the young prince Facilidas, whom he every day expected. But that prince not appearing in time, and provisions becoming scarce, no measure remained but making his retreat to Tigré; and, although he formed the best disposition for that purpose, the people of Lasta observing his intention in time, on his first movement attacked his rear-guard while he was descending the mountain, and put it to flight: being thereby masters of the higher ground, they had the command of the cowardly soldiers below them, who could not insure their destruction more certainly than by the indecent manner in which they were flying.

KEBA CHRISTOS, deserted by all except a few servants, continued courageously fighting; and, although it was very possible for him to have escaped, he disdained to survive the loss of his army. Receiving at that time a wound from a javelin, which passed through his belly, and judging the stroke to be mortal, he gave up all further resistance, fell upon his knees to prayer, and was again wounded by a
stone,

stone, which struck him to the ground. Two of the mountaineers immediately came up to him, one of whom did not know him, and contented himself with stripping the body; but the other remembering his face, cut his head off, and carried it to the rebel Melca Christos.

THE misfortune was followed by another in Gojam, great to the nation in general, and greater still to the Catholic cause in particular. At the time that Sela Christos was in Begemder with prince Facilidas, the Galla from Bizamo, supposing the province of Damot without defence, passed the Nile, laying the whole province waste before them. Fecur Egzie, lieutenant-general under Sela Christos, although he had with him only a small number of troops, did not hesitate to march against those savages, to endeavour, if possible, to stop their ravages. The Galla, surprised at this, thought it was Sela Christos, and fled before him. He had now pursued them almost alone, and lighted in a low meadow to give grass to his horse, when he was surrounded and slain by a number of the enemy that lay hid among the bushes, and discovered how ill he was attended.

HE was reputed a man of the best understanding, and the most liberal sentiments of any in Ethiopia; a great orator, excelling both in the gracefulness of manner and copiousness and purity of his language. He was among the first that embraced the Catholic religion, even before the king or Sela Christos, and was the principal promoter of the translations of the Portuguese books into Ethiopic, assisted by the Jesuit Antonio de Angelis. We have seen, in the year 1613, the great efforts he made in the embassy to India by the coast of Melinda. He was an excellent horseman, but more violent

and rash in battle than could have been expected from a man of such mild manners.

THERE happened at this time another novelty. The king brought the patriarch from Gorgora to Dancaz this year, at Easter, to hear that feast celebrated, with the Ethiopic service amended, of which we have already spoken abundantly. This countenance, so unnecessarily given to an innovation that produced every day such very bad effects to the Catholic interest, joined to many other circumstances, seemed clearly to indicate a change in that prince's mind.

THE patriarch having made but a short stay at Dancaz, it was currently reported a disagreement had happened, and that the king had sent him prisoner to Gorgora; and this false report affected greatly the weight the Catholics were supposed before to have had at court. But the transaction that followed was of a nature to promise much more consequences.

SOCINIOS had a daughter called *Oxoro Wengclawit*, which means the Evangelical, a name she certainly deserved not from her manners. This lady was first married to Bela Christos, a man of rank at court, from whom she had been divorced. She was next married to another, and then (her two former husbands being still alive) to Tecla Georgis, who had before married her sister, another of the king's daughters. During this marriage she had openly lived in adultery with Za Christos, who had been married to her sister, a third daughter of the king. Za Christos had been happy enough in preserving this lady's esteem longer than any other of her husbands, and nothing would content her now but a marriage

riage with her lover solemnly and publicly. For which purpose she applied to the patriarch to dispense with the affinity between her and Za Christos, arising from his having been married before to her sister.

It is not to be supposed that the patriarch would have resisted, if nothing had stood in the way except the affinity : but weighty impediments presented themselves besides ; for either the first marriage was valid, or it was not. If it was valid, then Wengelawit could not marry Za Christos or any one else, because her husband was alive ; nor could she marry her second, nor Tecla Georgis, her third. If the first marriage was not valid, then the second was, which husband was still alive ; and, in this case, a licence to marry was giving her liberty of having three husbands at one time. The patriarch, for these reasons, refused his authority to this manifold adultery and incest ; nor could he, notwithstanding the intercession of the whole court, ever be brought to comply. His firmness (however commendable) greatly increased the hatred to his person, and aversion to the church of Rome.

ONE day when the king was sitting in his apartment, a monk entered the room, crying with a loud voice, “ Hear the ambassador of God and of the Virgin Mary ! ” The king, upon first sight of the man, expecting some improper liberty might be taken, ordered his attendants to turn him out at the door, and, being removed from his presence, to bring word what he had to say, which was to this effect : “ It is three days since I rose from the dead. One day when I was standing in paradise, God called me, and sent me with this message to you :—O emperor ! says God, it is now many years

that I hoped you would amend of the great sin, the having forsaken the faith of your ancestors. All this time the Virgin Mary was kneeling before her blessed Son, beseeching him to pardon you ; and, upon the whole, it was agreed, that, unless you repent in a fortnight's time, you should be punished in such a manner that you will not forget it presently."

SOCINIOS desired them to ask the man, "How it was possible that, having so lately left the grave, his body should have so little of the emaciated appearance of one long buried, and be now in such good case, fat and fair?" To this he answered, "That, in paradise, he thanked God there was abundance of every thing ; and people were very well used there, for he had lived upon good bread, and plenty of good wine, biskets, and sweetmeats." To which Socinios answered, "Tell him, after the pains he had taken, it would be wrong in me to keep him long from so good a place as this his paradise. Let him go and acquaint the person who sent him, I shall live and die in the Roman Catholic faith ; and, in order that he may deliver the message quickly in the other world, speed him instantly out of this, by hanging him upon the tree before the palace-gate."

THE love of the wine, sweetmeats, and other celestial food, seemed to have forsaken the ambassador. Upon hearing this message he recanted, and was pardoned at the joint petition of those of the court that were present, who concurred with the monk in thinking, that the message of the emperor was an indecent one, and ought not to be delivered; that having been in paradise once, was as much as fell to the lot of any one man, and that he should therefore remain upon earth.

earth. The intended catastrophe, then, of this singular ambassador was remitted; but the truth of his mission was believed by the populace, and raised great scruples in every weak mind.

THE many misfortunes that had lately befallen the troops of the king were accounted as so much increase of power to the rebel Melca Christos, who, encouraged by the correspondence he held with the chiefs of the Alexandrian religion, began now to take upon him the state and office of a king. His first essay was to send, as governor to the province of Tigrè, a son of that great rebel Za Selassé, whose manifold treasons, we have already seen, occasioned the death of two kings, Za Denghel and Jacob.

ASCA GEORGIS was then governor of Tigrè for Socinios, a man of merit and valour, but poor, and though related to the king himself, had very few soldiers to be depended on; excepting his own servants, and two bodies of troops which the king had sent him to maintain his authority, and to keep his province in order.

THE new governor, sent by the rebel Melca Christos, had with him a considerable army; and, knowing the weakness of Asca Georgis, he paraded through the province in the utmost security.

ONE Saturday which, in defiance of the king's edict, he was to solemnize as a festival equal to Sunday, he had resolved on a party of pleasure in a valley, where, much at his ease, he was preparing an entertainment for his troops and friends, and such of the province as came to offer their obedience.

obedience. Intelligence of this party came to three Shums, commanders of small districts, two of them sons-in-law of the king, the third a very loyal subject. These three sent to Asca Georgis, to propose that, at a stated time, they should, each with his own men, fall separately upon the son of Za Selassé, and interrupt his entertainment.

THIS was executed with great order and punctuality. In the height of the festival, the rebels were surrounded by an unexpected enemy. To think of fighting was too late, nor was there time for flight. The greatest part of the army was cut to pieces with little resistance. The new governor saved himself among the rest by the goodness of his horse, leaving Billetana Gueta, or chief master of the household of the rebel Melca Christos, dead upon the spot, with about 4000 of his men. Among the plunder were taken 32 kettle-drums, which alone were evidence sufficient of the greatness of the slaughter.

ALTHOUGH the happy turn Socinios's affairs had taken had given him leisure to pass this winter at home, and in greater quiet than he had done in former ones, yet the calm which it had produced was of very short duration. The people of Lasta, perceiving some of the prince's army busy in destroying their harvest when almost ripe, came down suddenly upon them from the mountain, and put them to flight with very great slaughter. The blame of this was laid upon Sela Christos, who might have prevented the calamity; and this accusation, with many others, were brought against him to the king by Lefana Christos.

THIS man had been condemned to die for an offence, some time before, by Ras Sela Christos; but having fled to the king, who heard his cause, the sentence was reversed. Some time after this he fell into the hands of the Ras, who put him to death upon his former sentence, without regarding the late pardon of the king. This violent act became the foundation upon which his enemies built many accusations, mostly void of truth.

THE king upon this took from him the government of Gojam, and gave it to a young nobleman whose name was Serca Christos, supposed to be a friend and dependent upon the prince Facilidas. Serca Christos was no sooner arrived in his government than he resolved to rebel, and privately solicited the young prince Facilidas to take up arms and make a common cause against the king his father, in favour of the Alexandrian church. At the time that the young man departed to his government, Socinios had earnestly recommended to him, and he had most solemnly promised, to protect the Catholic religion in his province, and seemingly for this purpose he had taken with him a Jesuit named Francisco de Carvalho.

ANOTHER affair which the king particularly charged him with was, the care of a caravan which once a-year came from Narea. This, besides many other valuable articles for the merchant, brought 1000 wakeas of gold as tribute to the king, equal to about 10,000 dollars, or crowns of our money: its whole way was through barbarous and lawless nations of Galla till they arrived at the Nile; then through Gafats and Gongas, immediately after having passed it.

SERCA CHRISTOS, in his march, was come to a settlement of those last-mentioned savages, where Gafats, Agows, and Damots, all in peace, pastured immense flocks of cattle together. There are no where, I believe, in the world, cattle so beautiful as those of the Gafats, nor in such numbers. Large plains, for many days journey, are filled so full of these that they appear as one market.

SERCA CHRISTOS halted here to give grafs to his horses ; and, while this was doing, it entered into his young head, that making prize of the cattle was of much greater consequence than protecting the caravan of Narea. Assembling then his cavalry, he fell upon the poor Gafats and Damots, who feared no harm ; and, having soon put them all to flight, he drove off their cattle in such numbers, that, at Dancaz, it was said, above 100,000 had reached that market.

THE king, much shocked at this violent robbery, ordered Serca Christos to give up the cattle, and surrender himself as prisoner. This message of the king he answered in terms of duty and obedience ; but, in the mean time, went to the prince, and proposed to him to declare himself king and champion of the church of Alexandria. Facilidas received him with sharp reproofs, and he returned home much discontented. However, as he had now declared himself, he resolved to put the best face upon the matter ; and, in order to make it generally believed that the prince and he understood each other, he sent him publicly word, “ I have done what your highness ordered me ; come and take possession of your kingdom.” Upon which the prince ordered his messenger to be put in irons, and sent to Dancaz to the king his father.

AFTER this, Serca Christos ordered proclamation to be made that prince Facilidas was king, at the palace of the governor of Gojam, which Sela Christos had built near the convent of Collela. As one article of it was the abolishing the Roman faith, the fathers ran precipitately into the convent, and shut the doors upon themselves, fearing they should be insulted by the army of schismatics: but a number of the Portuguese, who lived in the neighbourhood, being brought into the church with them, and there having been loop-holes made in the walls, and abundance of fire-arms left there in deposit by Sela Christos, the rebel governor did not choose to attempt any thing against them at that time. On the contrary, he sent them word that he was in his heart a Roman Catholic, and only, for the present, obliged to dissemble; but he would protect them to the utmost, desiring them to send him the fire-arms left there by Sela Christos, which they absolutely refused to do.

SERCA CHRISTOS, apprehending that his army (if not acting under some chief of the royal family) would forsake him on the first appearance of the prince, had recourse to a child of the blood-royal, then living in obscurity among his female relations, and this infant he made king, in hopes, if he succeeded, to govern during his minority. There were many who expected the prince would reconcile him to the king, especially as he had yet preserved a shadow of respect for the Jesuits, and this he imagined was one cause why the schismatics had not joined him in the numbers necessary. In order to shew them that he designed no reconciliation with the king, and to make such agreement impossible, he adopted the same sacrilegious example that had so ill succeeded with Tecla Georgis.

Za SELASSE, a priest of Selalo, had been heard to say, when Serca Christos was appointed to the government of Gojam, "There is an end of the Catholic faith in this province." Being now called before the governor, he was forbid to say mass according to the forms of the church of Rome. This the priest submitted to ; but, being ordered to deny the two natures in Christ, he declared this was a point of faith which he would never give up, but always confess Christ was perfect God and perfect man. Upon this Serca Christos ordered him to be slain ; and he was accordingly thrust through with many lances, repeating these words, God and man ! God and man ! till his last breath.

SERCA CHRISTOS had now drawn the sword, and thrown away the scabbard. Upon receiving the news, the king ordered the prince, who waited but his command, to march against him. The murder of Za Selassé had procured an accession of fanatics and monks, but very few soldiers ; so that as soon as he heard with what diligence the prince was advancing, he left his whole baggage, and fled into those high and craggy mountains that form the banks of the Nile in Darnot.

THE prince pressed closely upon him, notwithstanding the difficulty of the ground ; so that no safety remained for him but to pass the Nile into the country of the Galla, where he thought himself in safety. In this, however, he was mistaken. He had to do with a general of the most active kind, in the person of Facilidas, who crossed the Nile after him, and, the third day, forced him to a battle on such ground as the prince had chosen, who was likewise much his superior in number of troops. But there was no longer
any

any remedy ; Serca Christos made the best that he could of this necessity, and fought with great obstinacy, till his men being for the most part slain, he was forced, with the few that remained, to take refuge on a high hill, whence the prince obliged him to deliver himself up to his mercy without condition.

FACILIDAS immediately dispatched news of his victory to court, and fifteen days after, he followed himself, bringing Serca Christos, with six of his principal officers and counsellors, loaded with heavy chains. Being interrogated by the judges, What he had to answer for his treasons ? the prisoner denied that he had any occasion to answer, because he had already received pardon from the prince. This excuse was not admitted, the prince having disowned it absolutely. Upon which he was sentenced to death ; and, though he appealed to the king, his sentence was confirmed.

It was too late to execute the sentence that night, but next morning the seven prisoners were put to death. One of the principal servants of Serca Christos being asked to confess and turn Catholic, abandoned himself to great rage, uttering many curses and blasphemies against the king, who, therefore, ordered him to be fastened upon a hook of iron, where he continued his curses till at last he was slain by lances.

SERCA CHRISTOS, cousin to Socinios, was treated with more respect. He, with seeming candour, declared, that he would die a Catholic ; and the king, very desirous of this, gave orders to Diego de Mattos, a priest, to attend him constantly in prison. After which, one night he sent five of his con-

fidential servants, who killed him privately, to prevent his recantation.

SOCINIOS had again taken Gojam from Sela Christos; which last disgrace so affected him, that he desired to retire and live as a private man in that province.

THE king, having now no other enemy, all his attention was employed in preparing for a campaign against Melca Christos of Lafta. But, as he found his army full of disaffection, it was proposed to him, before he took the field, to content them so far as to indulge the Alexandrians in some rites of the old church; and a proclamation was accordingly made by the king, "That those who chose to observe the Wednesday as a fast, instead of Saturday, might do it;" and some other such indulgences as these were granted, which were understood to affect the faith.

As soon as this came to the ears of the patriarch, he wrote a very sharp letter to the king, reproving him for the proclamation that he had made; adding, that it was an encroachment upon the office of the priesthood, that he, a layman, should take upon him to direct in matters merely ecclesiastical. He warned the king, moreover, that God would call him to the very strictest account for this presumption, and reminded him of the words of Azarias the chief priest to king Uzziah, and of the punishment of leprosy that followed the king's encroachment on the ecclesiastical function; and insisted upon Socinios contradicting his proclamation by another.

SocINIOS so far complied, that the alteration made by the last proclamation was confined to three articles. First, that no liturgy, unless amended by the patriarch, was to be used in divine service. Secondly, that all feasts, excepting Easter and those that depended upon it, should be kept according to the ancient computation of time. And, thirdly, that, whoever chose, might fast on Wednesday, rather than on the Saturday.

At the same time, the king expressed himself as greatly offended at the freedom of the application of the story of Azarias and Uzziah to him. He told the patriarch plainly, that it was not by his sermons, nor those of the fathers, nor by the miracles they wrought, nor by the desire of the people, but by his edicts alone, that the Roman religion was introduced into Ethiopia; and, therefore, that the patriarch had not the least reason to complain of any thing being altered by the authority that first established it. But, from this time, it plainly appears, that Socinios began to entertain ideas, at least of the church discipline and government, very opposite to those he had when he first embraced the Romish religion.

THE king now set out in his campaign for Lasta with a large army, which he commanded himself, and under him his son, the prince Facilidas. Upon entering the mountain, he divided his army into three divisions. The first commanded by the prince, and under him Za Mariam Adebo his master of the household, was ordered to attack, scale, and lodge themselves on the highest part of the mountain. The second he gave to Guebra Christos, governor of Begemder; and in this he placed the regiment, or body of troops, called

Inaches, veteran foldiers of Sela Chriftos, and a fmall, but brave body of troops containing the fons of Portuguefe: Thefe he directed to occupy the valleys and low ground. In the center the king commanded in perfon.

THE rebel chief and his mountaineers remained in a ftate of fecurity; for they neither thought to be fo speedily attacked, nor that Socinios could have raifed fo large an army. They abandoned, therefore, the lower ground, and all took pofts upon the heights. The prince advanced to the firft entrance, and ordered Damo, his Billetana Gueta, to force it with four companies of good foldiers, who afcended the mountain with great perfeverance; and, notwithstanding the obftinate defence of the rebels, made themfelves mafter of that poft, having killed two of the braveft officers Melca Chriftos had, the one named Bil-lene, the other Tecla Mariam, firnamed *defender of the faith*, becaufe he was the firft that brought Galla to the affiftance of Melca Chriftos.

THERE were likewise flain, at the fame time, four priefts and five monks, after a desperate refiftance; one of whom, calling the king's troops Moors, forbade them to approach for fear of defiling him, and then, with a book in his hand, threw himfelf over the rock, and was dafhed to pieces in the plain below. Here the prince met with an enemy he did not expect: The cold was fo exceffive, that above fifty perfons were frozen to death.

THE top of the mountain, which was the fecond entry into Lafta, was occupied by a ftill larger body of rebels, and, therefore, neceffary to be immediately ftormed, elfe thofe

below were in imminent danger of being dashed to pieces by the large stones rolled down upon them. The prince divided his army into two parties, exhorting them, without loss of time, to attack that post; but the rebels, seeing the good countenance with which they ascended, forsook their station and fled; so that this second mountain was gained with much less loss and difficulty than the first.

BEHIND this, and higher than all the rest, appeared the third, which struck the assailants at first with terror and despair. This was carried with still less loss on the part of the prince, because he was assisted by the Inaches and Portuguese, who cut off the communication below, and hindered one mountain from succouring the other. Here they found great store of arms, offensive and defensive; coats of mail, mules, and kettle drums; and they penetrated to the head-quarters of Melca Christos, which was a small mountain, but very strong in situation, where a Portuguese captain seized the seat which served as a throne to the rebel; and, had not they lost time by falling to plunder, they would have taken Melca Christos himself, who with difficulty escaped, accompanied by ten horse.

To this last mountain Socinios repaired with the prince, and they were joined by the governors of Amhara and Tigré, who had forced their way in from the opposite side.

HITHERTO all had gone well with the king; but when he had detached Guebra Christos, governor of Begemder, with the Inaches and Portuguese, who were at some distance, to destroy the crop, the mountaineers, again assembled on a high hill

hill above them, saw their opportunity, and fell suddenly upon the spoilers, and cut all the soldiers of Begemder to pieces. A considerable part of the Inaches fell also; but the rest, joining themselves with the Portuguese in one body, made good their retreat to the head-quarters.

THE destruction of the corn everywhere around them, and the impossibility of bringing provisions there, as they were situated in the midst of their enemies, obliged the king to think of returning before the rebels should collect themselves, and cut off his retreat. And it was with great difficulty, and still greater loss, he accomplished this, and retired to Dancaz, abandoning Lasta as soon as he had subdued it, but leaving Begemder almost a prey to the rebels whom he had conquered in Lasta.

SOCINIOS being now determined upon another campaign against Lasta, and for the relief of Begemder, ordered his troops to hold themselves in readiness to march as soon as the weather should permit. But an universal discontent had seized the whole army. They saw no end to this war, nor any repose from its victories obtained with great bloodshed, without spoil, riches, or reward; no territory acquired to the king, nor nation subdued; but the time, when they were not actually in the field, filled up with executions and the constant effusion of civil blood, that seemed to be more horrid than war itself. They, therefore, positively refused to march against Lasta; and the prince was deputed by them to inform the king, that they did not say the Roman faith was a bad one, as they did not understand it, nor desire to be instructed; that this was an affair which entirely regarded themselves, and no one would pretend to say there was
any

any merit in professing a religion they did not understand or believe : that they were ready, however, to march and lay down their lives for the king and common-weal, provided he restored them their ancient religion, without which they would have no concern in the quarrel, nor even wish to be conquerors. Whether the king was really in the secret or not, I shall not say ; but it is expressly mentioned in the annals of his reign, that Socinius did promise by his son to the army, that he would restore the Alexandrian faith if he should return victorious over Lafta ; and the sudden manner in which he executed this must convince every other person that it was so.

THE army now marched from Dancaz, upon intelligence arriving that the rebels had left their strong-holds in Lafta, and were in their way to the capital to give the king battle there. It was the 26th of July 1631 the king discovered, by his scouts, that the rebel Melca Christos was at hand, having with him an army of about 25,000 men. Upon this intelligence he ordered his troops to halt, and hear mass from Diego de Mattos ; and, having chosen his ground, he halted again at mid-day, and confessed, according to the rite of the church of Rome, and then formed his troops in order of battle.

It was not long till the enemy came in sight, but without shewing that alacrity and desire of engaging they used to do when in their native mountains. The king, at the head of the cavalry, fell so suddenly and so violently upon them, that he broke through the van-guard commanded by Melca Christos, and put them to flight before his foot could come up. The rest of the army followed the example of the lead-

er, and the enemy were everywhere trodden down and destroyed by the victorious horse, till night put an end to the pursuit.

MELCA CHRISTOS, in the beginning of the engagement, saved himself by the swiftness of his horse; but 8000 of the mountaineers were slain upon the spot, among whom was Bicané, general to Melca Christos, an excellent officer both for council and the field, and several other considerable persons, as well inhabitants of Lasta as others, who had taken that side from dislike to the king and his measures.

NEXT morning the king went out with his son to see the field of battle, where the prince Facilidas is said to have spoke to this effect in name of the army: "These men, whom you see slaughtered on the ground, were neither Pagans nor Mahometans at whose death we should rejoice—they were Christians, lately your subjects and your countrymen, some of them your relations. This is not victory which is gained over ourselves. In killing these you drive the sword into your own entrails. How many men have you slaughtered? How many more have you to kill? We are become a proverb even among the Pagans and Moors for carrying on this war, and for apostatizing, as they say, from the faith of our ancestors."—The king heard this speech without reply, and returned manifestly disconsolate to Dancaz; though many times before he had feasted and triumphed for the gaining of a lesser victory.

AFTER his arrival at Dancaz, he had a conference with the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, who, in a long speech, upbraided him with having deserted the Catholic faith at the
time

time when the victory obtained by their prayers gave him an opportunity of establishing it. The king answered, with seeming indifference, that he had done every thing for the Catholic faith in his power ; that he had shed the blood of thousands, and as much more was to be shed ; and still he was uncertain if it would produce any effect ; but that he should think of it, and send him his resolutions to-morrow.

THE next day Socinios made a declaration by Za Mariam to the patriarch, to this purport : “ When we embraced the faith of Rome, we laboured for it with great diligence, but the people shewed no affection for it. Julius rebelled out of hatred against Sela Christos, under pretence of being defender of the ancient faith, and was slain, together with many of his followers. Gabriel did the same. Tecla Georgis, likewise, made a league to die for the Alexandrian faith, which he did, and many people with him. The same did Serca Christos the preceding year ; and those peasants of Lafla fight for the same cause at this day. The faith of Rome is not a bad one ; but the men of this country do not understand it. Let those that like it remain in that faith, in the same way as the Portuguese did in the time of Atzenaf Segued ; let them eat and drink together, and let them marry the daughters of Abyssinians. As for those that are not inclined to the Roman faith, let them follow their ancient one as received from the church of Alexandria.”

UPON this declaration, delivered by Za Mariam, the patriarch inquired if it came from the king. Being answered that it did ; after a little pause, he returned this answer by Emanuel Almeyda, “ That the patriarch understood that both religions should be permitted in the kingdom, and that

the Alexandrians were to have every indulgence that could be wished by them, without violating the purity of the Catholic faith ; that, therefore, he had no difficulty of allowing the people of Lasta to live in the faith of their ancestors without alteration, as they had never embraced any other ; but as for those that had sworn to persist in the Catholic faith, and had received the communion in that church, by no means, without a grievous sin, could it be granted to them to renounce that faith in which they had deliberately sworn to live and die."

THE king, upon this answer, which he understood well, and expected, only replied, " What is to be done ? I have no longer the power of government in my own kingdom ;"—and immediately ordered a herald to make the following proclamation :—

" HEAR US ! hear us ! hear us ! First of all we gave you the Roman Catholic faith, as thinking it a good one ; but many people have died fighting against it, as Julius, Gabriel, Tecla Georgis, Serca Christos, and, lastly, these rude peasants of Lasta. Now, therefore, we restore to you the faith of your ancestors ; let your own priests say their mass in their own churches ; let the people have their own altars for the sacrament, and their own liturgy, and be happy. As for myself, I am now old and worn out with war and infirmities, and no longer capable of governing ; I name my son Facilidas to reign in my place."

THUS, in one day, fell the whole fabric of the Roman Catholic faith, and hierarchy of the church of Rome, in Abyssinia ; first regularly established, as I must always think, by Peter

ter Paez, in moderation, charity, perseverance, long-suffering, and peace; extended and maintained afterwards by blood and violence beyond what could be expected from heathens, and thrown down by an exertion of the civil power in its own defence, against the encroachments of priesthood and ecclesiastical tyranny, which plainly had no other view than, by annihilating the constitution under its native prince, to reduce Abyssinia to a Portuguese government, as had been the case with so many independent states in India already.

THIS proclamation was made on the 14th of June 1632. After this Socinios took no care of public affairs. He had been for a long time afflicted with various complaints, especially since the last campaign in Lafta; and affairs were now managed by prince Facilidas in his father's place, though he did not take upon him the title of King. Emana Christos, brother of Sela Christos, a steady Alexandrian, and Guebra Christos, were then made governors of Lafta and Begemder; but no steps were taken in this interval against the Jesuits.

ON the 7th of September the king died, and was buried with great pomp, by his son Facilidas, in the church of Ganeta Jesus, which he himself had built, professing himself a Roman Catholic to the last. The Portuguese historians deny both his resignation of the crown, and his perseverance in the Roman Catholic faith to his death, but this apparently for their own purposes.

He was a prince remarkable for his strength of body; of great courage and elevation of mind; had early learned the

exercise

exercise of arms, patience, perseverance, and every military virtue that could be acquired; and had passed the first of his life as a private person, in the midst of hardships and dangers.

He is celebrated to this day in Abyssinia for a talent, which seems to be the gift of nature, that of choosing upon the first view the proper ground for the camp or battle, and embracing, in his own mind in a moment, all the advantages and disadvantages that could result from any particular part of it. This talent is particularly recorded in several short proverbs, or military adages, such as the following: "Blind him first, or you shall never beat him." This most material qualification seemed to have been in part transmitted to Ras Michael, the great general in my time, descended from Socinios by his mother; and, by this superiority alone over the other commanders opposed to him, he is said to have been victorious in forty-three pitched battles.

SocINIOS embraced the Catholic religion from conviction, and studied it with great application, as far as his narrow means of instruction would allow him; and there can be no doubt that, under the moderate conduct of Peter Pacz, who converted him, he would have died a martyr for that religion; and there seems as little reason to doubt, conscientious as he was, if he had been a young man he would have quitted it for the good of his country, and from his inability to suffer the tyranny of the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, and his continual encroachment upon civil government. Being, in the last years of his life, left without one soldier to draw his sword for the Catholic cause, he kept his religion, and abandoned his crown; and having been, it should seem, for some time convinced that the government
of

of the church of Rome, in such hands as he left it, was incompatible with monarchy, he took no pains to change Facilidas's known sentiments, or to render him favourable to the Roman faith, or to name another of his sons to succeed him whom he found to be more so.

THE Jesuits, considering only the catastrophe, and unmindful of the strenuous efforts made to establish their religion during his whole reign, have traduced his character as that of an apostate, for giving way to the universal demand of his people to have their ancient form of worship restored when his army had deserted him, and he himself was dying of old age. But every impartial man will admit, that the step he took, of abdicating his sovereignty over a people who had abjured the religion he had introduced among them, was, in his circumstances, the noblest action of his life, and just the reverse of apostacy.

THIS resignation of the crown, and his tenacious persevering in the Catholic faith, together with the moderation of his son, the prince Facilidas, in appointing a regency to govern, rather than to mount the throne himself during his father's life, are three facts which we know to be true from the Abylinian annals, and which the Jesuits have endeavoured to suppress, that they might the more easily blacken the character both of the father and the son.

THEY have pretended that it was the queen, and other ladies at court, who by their influence seduced the king from the Catholic religion. But Socinios was then past seventy, and the queen near sixty, and he had no other wives or mistresses. To judge, moreover, by his behaviour in the affair
of

of Adera, sister to Tecla Georgis, the voice of the women at court seems to have had no extraordinary weight with him. In a word, he never varied in his religion after he embraced that of Rome, but stedfastly adhered to it, when the pride and bad conduct of the Jesuits, its professors, had scarcely left another friend to it in the whole kingdom ; and, therefore, the charge of apostacy is certainly an unmerited falsehood.

As it is plain the Portuguese, from the beginning, believed their religion could only be established by force, and were persuaded such means were lawful, the blame of so much bloodshed for so many years, and the total miscarriage of the whole scheme at last, lay at the door of their sovereign, the king of Spain and Portugal ; who, having succeeded to his wish in his conquest of India, seems not to have had the same anxiety the patriarch had for the conversion of Abyssinia, nor even to have thought further of sending a body of troops with his priests to the succour of Socinios, whom he left to the prayers of Urban VIII. the merit of Ignatius Loyola, and the labours of his furious and fanatic disciples.

T R A V E L S

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

B O O K IV.

A N N A L S O F A B Y S S I N I A,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL.

CONTINUATION OF THE ANNALS, FROM THE DEATH OF SOCI-
NIOS TILL MY ARRIVAL IN ABYSSINIA.

FACILIDAS, OR SULTAN SEGUED.

From 1632 to 1665.

*The Patriarch and Missionaries are banished—Seek the Protection of a
Rebel—Delivered up to the King, and sent to Mafuab—Prince Clau-
dius rebels—Sent to Weebné—Death and Character of the King.*

AS soon as the prince Facilidas had paid the last honours
to his father, he set about composing those disorders
which had so long distracted the kingdom by reason of the
difference of religion. Accordingly he wrote to the patri-
arch,

arch, that, the Alexandrian faith being now restored, his leaving the kingdom had become indispensable: that he had lately understood, that an Abuna, sent for by his predecessor and by himself, was now actually on the way, and only deferred his arrival from a resolution not to enter the kingdom till the Romish patriarch and his priests should have left it; and, therefore, he commanded the patriarch and fathers, assembled from their several convents in Gojam and Dembea, to retire immediately to Fremona, there to wait his further pleasure.

THE patriarch endeavoured to parry this, with offering new concessions and indulgencies; but the king informed him that he was too late; and that he wished him to be advised, and fly, while it was time, from greater harm that would otherwise fall upon him.

It was not long before the patriarch had revenge of Facilidas for this intimation of the expectation of a successor in the person of the Abuna. For on that very Easter there did arrive one, whose name was Sela Christos, calling himself Abuna, who performed all the functions of his office, dedicated churches, administered the sacrament, and ordained priests. After continuing in office some months, he was detected by a former companion of his, and found to be a man of very bad character, from Nara, the frontier of Abyssinia, and that by profession he had been a dealer in horses.

FACILIDAS then ordered his uncle, Sela Christos, to be brought before him, received him kindly, and offered him again his riches and employments. That brave man, Christian in every thing but in his hatred and jealousy against his

his sovereign and nephew, refused absolutely to barter his faith to obtain the greatest good, or avoid the greatest punishment, it was in the power of the king to inflict. After repeated trials, all to no purpose, the king, overcome by the instigation of his enemies, banished him to Anabra in Shawada, a low, unwholesome district amidst the mountains of Samen. But hearing that he still kept correspondence with the Jesuits, and that their common resolution was to solicit Portuguese troops from India, and remembering his former oath, he sent orders to his place of exile to put him to death, and he was in consequence hanged upon a cedar-tree.

TELLEZ, the Portuguese historian, in his collection of martyrs that died for the faith in Abyssinia, has deservedly inserted the name of Sela Christos; but professes that he is ignorant of the time of his death, and under what species of torment he suffered. The only information that I can give is what I have just now written. It was in the beginning of the year 1634 he was carried to Shawada in chains, and confined upon the mountain Anabra; but no mention is made of any other hardship being put upon him than his being in irons, nor is more usual in that kind of banishment. It was at the end of that year, however, that he was executed in the manner above mentioned, being suspected of having corresponded with the patriarch and Jesuits, and afterwards of inciting his nephew Claudius to rebel, as, it appears, he had meditated long before, and actually did very soon after.

THE 9th of March 1633, the king ordered the patriarch to leave Dancaz, and, with the rest of the fathers, to proceed im-

mediately to Fremona, under the conduct of four people of the first consideration, Tecla Georgis, brother of Keba Christos, Tecla Saluce, one of the principal persons in Tigré, and two Azages, men of great dignity at court. These were joined by a party of soldiers belonging to Claudius, brother of the king, supposed to have been in the conspiracy with Sela Christos his uncle, to supplant his brother Facilidas by the help of the Jesuits and Portuguese troops from India. But as soon as the patriarch had fallen into disgrace, and Sela Christos lost his life, that prince returned to the church of Alexandria, as did all the other sons of Socinios; after which, Claudius seized to his own use all the lands and effects that he found in Gojam, and was now by the king made governor of Begemder. Under this escort the patriarch and his company arrived at Fremona in the end of April 1633, after having been often robbed and ill-treated by the way, the guards that were given to defend them conniving with the banditti that came to rob them.

HOWEVER strictly the fathers observed the precepts of scripture on other occasions, in this they did not follow the line of conduct prescribed by our Saviour—"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." They were not sheep that went patiently and dumb to the slaughter; and, if their hearts, as they say, were full of love and charity to Abyssinia, it was strangely accompanied with the resolution they had taken to send Jerome Lobo, the most famous, because the most bigotted Jesuit of the whole band, first to the viceroy of India, and then to Spain, to solicit an army and fleet which were to lay all this kingdom in blood.

THE king was perfectly advised of all that passed. As he saw that the patriarch endeavoured to gain time, and knew the reason of it; and, as the fathers among them had a considerable quantity of fire-arms, he sent an officer to the patriarch at Fremona, commanding him to deliver up the whole of these, with gun-powder and other ammunition, and to prepare, at the same time, to set out for Masuah. This at first the patriarch refused to do. Nor did Facilidas punish this disobedience by any harsher method than convincing him mildly of the imprudence and inutility of such refusal, and the bad consequences to themselves. Upon which the patriarch at last surrendered the articles required to the officer sent by the king, but he resolved very differently as to the other injunction of carrying all his brethren to Masuah. On the contrary, he determined by every means to scatter them about the kingdom of Abyssinia, and leave them behind if he was forced to embark at Masuah, which he, however, resolved to avoid and resist to the utmost of his power.

In order to do this, it was resolved that he should solicit the Baharnagash (John Akay, then in rebellion) to take them under his protection, and for that purpose to send a number of armed men, on a night appointed, to meet them near Fremona, and carry them in safety from any pursuit of the governor of Tigré. This project, extraordinary as it was, succeeded. Akay promised them his protection. The patriarch and priests, deceiving the guard the king had set upon them, escaped in the night, and joined the soldiers of John Akay, commanded by Tecla Emanuel, who was ready to receive them: They took refuge at Addicota, the soldiers of the guard, though alarmed, not daring to pursue them in the night, as
not

not knowing the number and power of their protectors, and fearing they might fall into some ambush.

It may not be amiss here to take notice, that this John Akay was the very man with whom Tecla Georgis had associated for the murder of Abba Jacob. He was a shrewd man, and had great power by living in the neighbourhood of Sennaar, to which country he could retreat when occasion required. He received the patriarch with great kindness.

ADDICOTA is an inaccessible rock, perpendicular on all sides, excepting where there is a narrow path by which was the entrance. Here the patriarch thought he could continue in Abyssinia, in defiance of Facilidas, till he should procure succours from India.

It was not, however, long before he found how little dependence there was upon this new protector; for, in the midst of all his schemes, he received orders to remove from Addicota, under pretence that they were not there enough in safety; and Akay transferred them vexatiously from place to place, into hot and unwholesome situations, always under the same pretence, till he had destroyed their healths, and exhausted their strength and patience.

THERE is but one way of disposing such people to grant a favour, and it was surprising the patriarch did not find this out sooner. Jerome Lobo was sent with a small present in gold, desiring they might have leave to continue in their old habitation, Addicota. Lobo found John Akay very much taken up in a pursuit that some ignorant monks had put

into his head. They had made him believe that there was a treasure hid under a certain mountain which they had shewn him, but that the devil who guarded it had constantly hindered his predecessors from acquiring it. At present they had found out, that this devil had gone a journey far off, was become blind and lame, and was, besides, in very great affliction for the death of a son, the only hopes of his devilship's family, having now only a daughter remaining, very ugly, lame, squinting, and sickly, and that all these reasons would hinder him from being very anxious about his treasure. But, even supposing he did come, they had an old monk that would exorcise him, a man as eminent for wisdom as for sanctity.

In short, they produced a monk, one of their brethren, above a hundred years old, whom they mounted upon a horse, then tied him to the animal, wrapping him round with black wool, which, it seems, was the conjuring habit. He was followed by a black cow and some monks, who carried beer, hydromel, and roasted wheat, which was necessary, it seemed, to refresh the devil after his long journey and great affliction, and put him in good humour, if he should appear.

THE old monk sung without ceasing, the workmen wrought vigorously, and much earth and stones were removed; at last they discovered some rat, mice, or mole-holes, at the sight of which a cry of joy was heard from all the parties present.

THE old monk sings again; the cow is brought in great hurry, and sacrificed, and pieces of it thrown to the rats and mice;

mice : again they fall to work with double keenness, the mole-holes vanish, and a hard rock appears. His being the last obstacle, they fall keenly upon the rock, and the old monk chants till he is hoarse with singing ; the heat of the sun is excessive ; no gold appears ; John Akay loses his patience, and asks when it may be seen ? The monks lay the whole blame upon him. because, they say, he had not enough of faith. They give over work ; with one consent fall to eating the cow, and then disperse.

FATHER Jerome, takes the opportunity of this disappointment to abuse the monks. He presents the Baharnagash with two ounces of gold, and some other trifles, instead of the treasure which he was to get in the mountain : he obtains the request he came to solicit, and the patriarch and fathers return to Addicota.

FACILIDAS, informed of the asylum afforded to the Jesuits who had fled from Fremona, applied to John Akay, promising him forgiveness of what was past if he would deliver the priests under his protection. This John Akay declined to do from motives of delicacy. It was breaking his word to deliver his guests into the hands of the king ; but, by a very strange refinement, he agreed to sell them to the Turks. Accordingly they were delivered for a sum to the basha of Masuah, who received them with much greater kindness than they had experienced in the Christian country from which they fled.

Two Jesuits were purposely left behind, with the consent of John Akay, unknown to Facilidas, in fervent hopes that some occasion would soon offer of suffering martyrdom for

the true faith; and in this expectation they were not long disappointed, all those who were left in Abyssinia having lost their lives by violent deaths, most of them on a gibbet, by order of Facilidas, the last of whom was Bernard Nogeyra.

FACILIDAS, weary of the obstinacy of these missionaries, uneasy also at the suspicions they created, that a number of Portuguese troops would be poured in upon his country by the viceroy of India, concluded a treaty with the bashas of Masuah and Suakem, for preventing any Portuguese passing into Abyssinia, by shutting these ports against them. Not above eight years before, that is, in the year 1624, Socinios had sent a zebra, and several other curious articles, as presents to the basha of Suakem, with a request to him not to obstruct, as the Turks had used to do, the entrance of any Portuguese into his dominions. But those times were now so changed, that both nations, Turks and Abyssinians, had resolved, with one consent, to exclude them all, for their mutual safety, peace, and advantage.

THIS treaty with the Turks, made by Facilidas, probably gave rise to that calumny of the Jesuits, that, for fear of a return of the Portuguese, that prince had embraced the Mahometan religion, and sent for preceptors from Mocha to instruct him in their tenets. This, I say, if not founded upon the treaty I mention, was destitute of the least shadow of truth; but, like other calumnies then propagated in great number, arose solely from the rage, malice, and heated imaginations of desperate fanatics.

AMIDST the general regret this revolution in the church of Ethiopia occasioned at Rome, there were some who thought the pride, obstinacy, and violence of the Jesuits, the hardness and cruelty of their hearts in instigating Socinios to that perpetual effusion of blood, and their independence, their encroachments upon, and resistance of the civil power, were faults resulting from the institutions of that particular society, and that these occasioned the miscarriage; that a well-grounded aversion to the teachers had created a repugnance to the doctrines preached, and was the reason of the expulsion of the fathers, and the relapse of Abyssinia to the Alexandrian faith. From this persuasion, six capuchins, all of them Frenchmen of the reformed Order of St Francis, were sent from Rome after the death of Nogeyra, by the congregation *De Propaganda Fide*, and these had protections from the grand signior.

Two attempted the entering Abyssinia by way of the Indian Ocean, that is, from Magadoxa, and were slain by the Galla, after advancing a very short way into the country. Two of them penetrated into Abyssinia, and were stoned to death. The remaining two, hearing the fate of their companions at Masuah, and not being so violently bent upon a crown of martyrdom as were the Portuguese missionaries, prudently returned home, carrying with them the account of this bad success.

THREE other capuchins were sent after this. It is impossible to judge from their conduct what idea they had formed; for they themselves gave the first information of their intended coming to Facilidas, who thereupon recommended it to the basha to receive them according to their merits; and

and thereupon, on their arrival at Suakem, their heads were cut off by his order; the skins of their heads and faces stripped off and sent to the king of Abyssinia, that, by their colour, he might know them to be franks, and by their tonsure to be priests. Nor was it possible afterwards to introduce any Catholic missionaries, either during this or the following reign.

FACILIDAS having thus provided against being further disturbed by missionaries, and having reduced all his subjects to the obedience of the Alexandrian church, sent again messengers to bring an Abuna from Cairo, while he took the field against Melca Christos his rival, who continued in arms at the head of the peasants of Lafla, though there was now no longer any pretence that the Alexandrian faith was in danger. Both armies met in Libo, a country of the Galla, where a panic seized the king's troops, his horse flying at the first onset. The royal army being entirely dispersed, Melca Christos pursued his good fortune, and entered the king's palace, took possession of the throne, and was crowned; he appointed to all the great places in government, and distributed a largess, or bounty, to his soldiers.

THE Portuguese historians say, that this happened at Dancaz, not at Libo. But they should have remembered what they before have said, that an epidemic fever raged in all Dembea, so that the king was not at Dancaz that year. He passed the winter of the preceding one at Dobit, near Begemder.

THE memoirs of these missionaries, even when they were in the country, are to be read with great caution, being

full of misrepresentations of the manners and characters of men, magnifying some actions, flighting others, and attributing to their favourites services that were really performed by their adversaries; and, from the coming of Alphonso Mendes, till they were banished to Masuah, great part of their account is untrue, and the rest very suspicious. After their retiring to India, which is the time we are now speaking of, the whole that they have published is one continued tissue of falsehood and calumny, either hear-say stories communicated to them, as they say, by the remnants of zealots still alive in Abyssinia, or fabrications of their own, invented for particular purposes. In continuing this history, I shall take notice of some of these, though for facts I rely entirely upon the annals of the country, treating, however, the Abyssinian account of the Jesuits doctrines and behaviour with the same degree of caution.

THIS forwardness of his rival Melca Christos did not discourage Facilidas. Without losing a moment, he sent expresses to Kafmati Dimmo, governor of Samen, to Ras Sela Christos, of Damot, and to his brother Claudius, governor of Begemder, ordering them to march and attack Melca Christos, then acting as sovereign in the king's palace at Libo.

THESE three generals were not slack in obeying the commands of Facilidas. They surrounded Melca Christos before he expected them, and forced him to a battle, in which he was defeated and lost his whole army. He himself, fighting manfully at the head of his troops, was slain hand to hand by Cosmas, a soldier of Kafmati Claudius, the king's brother.

JEROME

JEROME LOBO mentions Facilidas's bad success against the Gallas and Agows as an instance of divine vengeance which pursued him. But if the approbation or disapprobation of heaven is to be appealed to in this reign as a proof of the justness of the measures taken, we must be obliged to say the cause of the Jesuits was not the cause of heaven. If we except the temporary advantage gained over Facilidas, and the accident that happened to his army at Lasta, perpetual victory had attended the wars in which this prince was engaged; for so far was he from being unfortunate this campaign against the Agows, that, on the 9th of February 1636, he marched from Libo into Gojam, and totally defeated the two great tribes Azena and Zeegam. After which he sent his army with Kasmari Melca Bahar, who coming up with the Galla, a great body of whom had made an incursion into Gojam, he totally overthrew them, and passing the Nile into their country, laid it waste, and returned with a great number of cattle, and multitudes of women and children to be sold as slaves.

THE king then returned to Begemder, and took up his head-quarters at Gonsala; but, soon hearing that the Abuna Marcus was arrived, he quitted that place, and came to meet him in Gondar.

THE next year, which was the fifth of his reign, and the first of the coming of Abuna Marcus, he again fought with the Agows, and beat the Denguis, Hancasha, and the Zeegam, and passed that winter in Gafat; nor was he ever unfortunate with the Agows or Galla. But a misfortune happened this year (the 6th of his reign) which very much affected the whole kingdom. The people of Laila seemed to grow

grow more inveterate after the defeat they had received under Melca Christos. In the stead of that prince slain in battle, they appointed his son, a young man of good hopes.

FACILIDAS, trusting to his former reputation acquired in these mountains in his father's time, on the 3d of March 1638 advanced with a large army into Lasta, with a design to bring these peasants to a battle. But the rebels, growing wise by their losses, no longer chose to trust themselves on the plain, but, retiring to the strongest posts, fortified them so judiciously, that, without risking any loss themselves, they cut off all supplies or provisions coming to the king's army.

It happened at that time the cold was so excessive that almost the whole army perished amidst the mountains; great part from famine, but a greater still from cold, a very remarkable circumstance in these latitudes. Lasta is barely 12° from the Line, and it was now the equinox in March, so that the sun was but 12° from being in the zenith of Lasta, and there was in the day twelve hours of sun. Yet here is an example of an army, not of foreigners, but natives, perishing with cold in their own country, when the sun is no farther than 12° from being vertical, or from being directly over their heads; a strong proof this, as I have often remarked, that there is no way of judging by the degrees of heat in the thermometer, what effect that degree of heat or cold is to have upon the human body.

THE eighth year of the reign of Facilidas, Claudius, governor of Begender, his brother, revolted and joined the rebels

bels of Laſta. It ſeems, that this prince had been long encouraged by the Jeſuits, and his uncle Sela Chriſtos, in expectation of ſucceeding his father Socinios, and ſupplanting Facilidas, his brother, in the kingdom. But, after the baniſhment of the Jeſuits, and the death of Sela Chriſtos, Facilidas thinking, theſe bad counſellors being removed, he would continue firm in his duty, and willing to diſbelieve the whole that had been reported of his deſigns, made him governor of Begemder.

It happened, however, that this very year two Abunas arrived from Egypt, one by way of Sennaar, the other by Dancali. Upon inquiry it was found, that Abba Michael, the latter of theſe Abunas, had been ſent for by Kaſmati Claudius, in expectation that he was to be on the throne by the time of his Abuna's arrival. This implied clearly that the king's death was agreed on. Claudius, without attempting a vindication, or awaiting the diſcuſſion of this ſtep, fled to Laſta, and joined Laeca, ſon of Melca Chriſtos, a youth then at the head of the rebels.

FACILIDAS baniſhed Abba Michael to Serké, a Mahometan town in the way to Sennaar, and admitted Abba Johannes, whom he himſelf had ſent for from Cairo, into the office of Abuna.

Soon after this, Claudius was ſurpriſed and taken priſoner, and brought to the king, and, though ſtained in a high degree with ingratitude, treaſon, and intended fratricide, he could not be brought to order his execution, but, like a wife and merciful prince, reflecting on the ancient uſages of the empire, and how much royal blood might be daily ſaved:

saved by sequestering the descendants of the imperial family upon the mountain, he chose that of Wechné in Belessen, which served ever after for this purpose.

THIS is the third mountain within the reach of written history, first chosen, and then reprobated, as a state-prison for all the males of the royal family, excepting the one seated upon the throne.

THIS interruption of the imprisonment of the princes for a time, and the resuming it again for another period, have led the Portuguese writers, very little acquainted with the history or constitution of this country, into various disputes and difficulties, which I shall fully explain and reconcile in their proper place. It is sufficient for the present to observe, that Claudius was sent into exile to the mountain of Wechnè, and that he was the first prince banished thither, where he lived for many years.

THE king, finding that nothing material pressed at home, marched into Gojam to Enzagedem, whence he sent Ras Bela Christos against the Shangalla, N. W. of the country of the Agows. These people being put upon their guard by their neighbours, all disaffected to the king, contrived to place themselves in ambush so judiciously, that Bela Christos, marching in security into their country, was surrounded by the Shangalla, whom he thought yet at a distance. Great part of his troops was slain by the arrows of the enemy, who, from their caves and holes in the mountain, poured their missile weapons, stones, and arrows on the troops, at so small a distance that every one took place, though above the reach of swords, and lances, or such common weapons ;

pons; others were overpowered by large bodies of men falling from the thickets, and fighting them firmly foot to foot. Many officers were that day slain, among the rest Alzaguè and Petros, two persons of great distinction in the palace. But the king, however afflicted for the loss of his men, well knew that this defeat would have no other consequences; so returned to his capital, with resolution to make another vigorous effort against Lasta.

THE manner in which this expedition was prevented cannot but give us a high idea of Facilidas: Laeca, at the head of an army of veteran troops, whose affection he never had occasion to doubt, thought it safer to trust to the generosity of a king, who had slain his father in battle, than to the acquiring a crown that was not his, by persevering any longer in rebellion. Accordingly he surrendered himself, without condition, to Facilidas, who immediately committed him to prison, which seeming severity, however, meant nothing further, than to shew him the lenity which followed was entirely his own, and not suggested to him by the officiousness of courtiers; for no sooner was he arrived at Gondar, than he sent for Laeca from prison, received him not only kindly, but with great marks of distinction; and, instead of banishing him to Wechné, as he did his own brother Claudius, and which, as being of the blood-royal, should have been his destination likewise, the king entered into a kind of treaty with Laeca, by which he gave him large possessions in Begemder near Lasta, and married him to his daughter Theocléa, by whom, however, he had no children, but lived long in constant friendship and confidence with Facilidas.

EXCEPT the events which I have already recorded, there is nothing farther in this long reign worthy of being insisted upon; the early inroads of the Galla, in plundering parties, and the seditions and revolts of the Agows from the oppression and extortion of their governors, were such as we find in every reign; and in all these Facilidas was victorious, whilst the Hancasha and Zeegam were greatly weakened in these campaigns.

FACILIDAS was taken ill at Gondar, in the end of October, of a disease which, from its first appearance, he thought would prove mortal. He, therefore, sent to his eldest son Hannes, whom he had constantly kept with him, and who was now of age to govern, and recommended to him his kingdom, and the persevering in the ancient religion. He died the 30th of September 1665, in great peace and composure of mind, and they buried him at Azazo.

If we are obliged to give his father the preference, from the greater variety of trials which he underwent, we must in justice allow, that, after his father, Facilidas was the greatest king that ever sat upon the Abyssinian throne. He had every good quality necessary to constitute a great prince, without any alloy or mixture, that, upon so much provocation as he had, might have misled him to be a bad one. He was calm, dispassionate, and courteous in his behaviour. In the very difficult part he had to act between his father and the nation, the necessities of the times had taught him a degree of reserve, which, if it was not natural, was not therefore the less useful to him. He was in his own person the bravest soldier of his time, and always exposed himself in proportion as the occasion was important.

To this were added all the qualities of a good general, in which character he seems to have equalled his father Socinius, who else was universally allowed to be the first of his time. Fierce and violent in battle, he was backward in shedding blood after it. Though an enemy to the Catholic religion, yet, from duty to his father, he lived with the patriarch and Jesuits upon so familiar a footing, that they confess themselves it was not from any part of his behaviour to them they ever could judge him an enemy. He was most remarkable for an implicit submission to his father's commands; and, upon this principle, fought in favour of the Catholic religion against his own friends and persuasion, because such were the orders of his sovereign. He was of a very mild and pleasant temper, as appeared by his behaviour to Melca Christos, to his brother Claudius, to his uncle Sela Christos, and to the patriarch and Jesuits.

It is true, that, of these last, Sela Christos, and many of the Jesuits, were put to death in his reign; but this was not till they had experienced repeated acts of mercy and forgiveness; still, persisting in constant rebellion against government, they were justly cut off as traitors and rebels by the civil power, in the very act of their conspiracy against the life of the king and constitution of the country.

THERE is published by Tellez a letter of Alphonso Mendes, written, as is falsely said, from Masuah, where it is dated, but truly from Goa. If, as the patriarch pretends, he wrote it from Masuah, it is another proof of this prince's clemency, that he ever suffered the author of such an indecent libel to return to India in peace. It is well known, that, on the first requisition of Facilidas, the Turks would

have delivered the patriarch into his hands ; and, every one that reads it must allow, such language from a low-born priest to a king, deserved every exemplary punishment offended royalty could inflict : It would not have been mild, had such liberty been taken by a stranger in his native country, Portugal.

THE patriarch accuses Facilidas with the crime committed by Absalom, which is, I suppose, debauching his father's wives and concubines. But, unluckily for the truth of this story, we have the Jesuit's own testimony, that Socinios had put away his wives and concubines before he embraced the Catholic religion, so at his father's death this was impossible, unless he could commit incest with his own mother, who was at that time a woman near sixty. But we shall suppose that they existed, were never married, and, at the time of their being put away, they were 18 years of age at an average. The king put them away in the year 1621; and, therefore, in the year 1634, they would be 30 years of age ; and any body that has seen the effects that number of years has upon Abyssinian beauty, must confess they could be no great temptation to a prince.

THE next calumny mentioned in this libel is, the murder of his brother Claudius, nay, of all his brothers. Now we have seen, in the history of his reign, that Claudius had fairly forfeited his life by a meditated fratricide, and by an overt act of rebellion in which he was taken prisoner. Yet so mild and placable was Facilidas, that he refused to put him to death, but sent him prisoner to the mountain of Wechnè, and mercifully revived the ancient usage of banishing the princes of the blood-royal to the mountain, instead of executing them,

them, which had been the practice to his time, and had occasioned the death of above sixty of these unfortunate princes within the last hundred years.

To mount Wechné he also sent his own son Dávid, and with him all his brothers ; and, so far from being murdered, we shall find them mostly alive attending an extraordinary festival made for their sakes by Facilidas's grandson ; an accident so rare, that it seems Providence had permitted it in favour and vindication of truth and innocence, and to stamp the lie upon the patriarch's scandalous aspersions.

THE third falsehood is, that Facilidas turned Mahometan, and got doctors from Mocha to instruct him in the Koran. We have already seen what gave rise to this, if it indeed had any foundation at all ; but it is a well-known fact, that, though he governed the church, during a whole reign, mildly and judiciously, without any mark of bigotry, never were two princes better affected to the Alexandrian church than Facilidas and his son ; and never were two that had better reason, having both seen the disorders that other religions had occasioned.

WE see throughout all this piece of the patriarchs, a self-sufficient mind, gratifying itself by disgorging its passion and malice. If Alphonso Mendes had no regard, as it seems indeed he had not ; if he had no reverence to higher powers, such as scripture had taught him to have ; if he was too enlightened, or too infatuated, to take our Saviour's precepts for his rule, and, shaking the dust of Abyssinia from his feet, remit them to a Judge who will, at his own time, separate good from evil, still he should have had, at least, a brotherly love

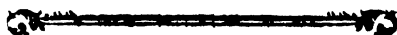
love and charity for those unfortunate people who were to fall into Facilidas's hands; and we cannot reasonably suppose but that the constant butcheries committed by the Turks afterwards upon the Catholic priests, wild enough to enter at Masuah and Suakem, were the fruits of the calumnious, intemperate libel of the patriarch.

AFTER the death of the last missionary, Bernard Nogeyra, no intelligence arrived of what was doing in Abyssinia, excepting from the Dutch settlements of Batavia, where Abyssinian factors, or merchants, had arrived; and where the industrious Mr Ludolf, very much engaged in the history of this country, and who spared no pains, maintained a correspondence, and thence he was informed that Facilidas had died after a long and prosperous reign, and had left his kingdom in peace to his son.

THIS intelligence alarmed the zeal of two great champions of the Jesuits; the one M. le Grande, late secretary to the French embassy to Portugal; and the other M. Piques, a member of the Sorbonne, a very confused, dull disputant upon the difference of religion.

THESE two worthies, without any proof or intelligence but their own warm and weak imaginations, fell violently upon poor Ludolf, accusing him of falsehood, partiality, and prevarication; and, right or wrong, they would have Facilidas plunged up to the neck in troubles, wading through labyrinths of misfortunes, conspiracies, and defeats, certainly dead, or about to die some terrible death by the vengeance of heaven; and this ridiculous report is unjustly spread abroad by all the zealots of those times. *Fata obstant*;—truth

will out. The annals of the country, written without a regard to either party, state, that, in the long reign of Facildas, notwithstanding the calamitous state in which his father left him the empire, very few misfortunes only are reported to have happened either to himself or lieutenants.



HANNES I. OR ÆLAFE SEGUED.

From 1665 to 1680.

Bigotry of the King—Disgusts his Son Yafous, who flies from Gondar.

IF this prince succeeded to his kingdom in peace, he had the address still to keep it so. He was not in his nature averse to war, though, besides two feeble attempts he made upon Lafta, and one against the Shangalla, all without material consequences, no military expedition was undertaken in his time; and no rebellion or competitor (so frequent in other reigns) at all disturbed his.

HANNES seems to have had the seeds of bigotry in his temper; from the beginning of his reign he commanded the

the Mahometans to eat no other flesh but what had been killed by Christians ; and gathered together the Catholic books, which the Jesuits had translated into the Ethiopic language; and burned them in a heap. Much of his attention was given to church matters, and, in regulating these, he seems to have employed most of his time. He deposed the Abuna Christadulus, appointed by his father, and in his place put the Abuna Sanuda.

THIS last measure seems to have displeased his eldest son Yafous, who fled from the palace one night, and passed the Nile ; and, though he was followed by Kasmati Aferata Christos, he was not overtaken, but staid some time in his sister's house, and then returned to Gondar at the request of his father.

A CONVOCATION of the clergy, the second in this reign, was now held, and great heats and divisions followed among two orders of monks, those of Eustathius and those of Debra Libanos. The king seems to have assisted at all these debates, and to have contented himself with holding the balance in his hands without declaring for either party. But these altercations and disputes could not satisfy the active spirit of the prince his son, who again fled from his father and from Gondar, but was overtaken at the river Bashilo, and brought back to the palace, where he found his father ill.

HANNES died the 19th of July, and was buried at Tedda, after having reigned 15 years. He seems, from the scanty memorials of his long reign, to have been a weak prince ;

but, perhaps, if the circumstances of the times were fully known, he may have been a wise one.

Y A S O U S I.

From 1680 to 1704.

Brilliant Expedition of the King to Wechnè—Various Campaigns against the Agows and Galla—Comet appears—Expedition against Zeegan and the Eastern Shangalla—Poncel's Journey—Murat's Embassy—Du Roule's Embassy—Du Roule assassinated at Sennaar—The King is assassinated.

YASOUS succeeded his father Hannes with the approbation of the whole kingdom. He had, as we have seen, twice in Hannes's life-time absconded from the palace; and this was interpreted as implying an impatience to reign. But I rather think the cause was a difference of manners, his father being extremely bigotted, sordid, and covetous; for he never, in those elopements, pretended to make a party contrary to his father's interest, nor shewed the least inclination to give either the army or the people a favourable impression of himself, to the disadvantage of the king. There was, besides, a difference in religious principles. Yasous had a great predilection for the monks of Bebra Li-

banos, or the high church ; while Hannes, his father, had done every thing in his power to instil into his son a prepossession in favour of those of Abba Eustathius.

To these opinions, therefore, so widely different, as well in religion as the things of the world, I attribute the young prince's disinclination to live with his father. This seems confirmed by the first step he took upon his mounting the throne, which was to make an alteration in the church government from what his father had left it at his death.

It was on the 7th of July 1680 he was proclaimed king ; the next day he deposed the Acab Saat Constantius, and gave his place to Afera Christos. He then called a council of the clergy on the 27th of September, when he deposed Itchegué Tzaga Christos, and in his room named Cyriacus.

It was now the time that, according to custom, he was to make his profession in regard to the difference I have formerly mentioned that subsisted between the two parties about the incarnation of Christ. But this he refused to do in the present state of the church, as there was then no certain Abuna in Abyssinia. For Hannes, before he died, had written to the patriarch of Alexandria to depose both Abuna Christodulus and Marcus, who, in case of death, was to have succeeded him, and this under pretence that he had varied in his faith between the two contending parties.

HANNES, therefore, desired the patriarch to appoint Abuna Sanuda, a man known to be devoted to the monks of St Eustathius and their tenets; whereas the other two priests were supposed to be inclined to the monks of Debra Libanos. Yafous told his clergy that he would not suffer Sanuda to be elected; and the assembly, with little opposition, conformed to the sentiments of the king, who sent immediately thereupon to Cairo, demanding peremptorily that Marcus might be appointed Abuna, and declaring his resolution to admit no other. He then ordered the church of Tecla Haimanout to be consecrated with great solemnity; he repaired and adorned it with much magnificence, and endowed it with lands, which increased its revenue very considerably.

THESE two circumstances (especially the last) shewed distinctly to the whole kingdom his affection for the high church, as explicitly as any proclamation could have done. And in this he continued steady during his whole life, notwithstanding the many provocations he met with from that restless body of men.

HAVING thus settled the affairs of the church, he proceeded to those of the state, and appointed Anastasius (then governor of Amhara) to be Ras, or lieutenant-general, in his whole kingdom, allowing him also to keep his province of Amhara. In this he shewed a wisdom and penetration that gained him the good opinion of every one; for Anastasius was a man advanced in years, of great capacity and experience, and of a most unblemished character among his neighbours, who, in all their own affairs, had recourse to, and were determined by, his counsels.

THE king then took a journey of a very extraordinary nature, and such as Abylinia had never before seen. Attended only by his nobility, of whom a great number had flocked to him, he sat down at the foot of the mountain of Wechné, and ordered all the princes of the royal family who were banished, and confined there, to be brought to him.

DURING the last reign, the mountain of Wechné, and those forlorn princes that lived upon it, had been, as it were, totally forgotten. Hannes having sons of an age fit to govern, and his eldest son Yasous living below with his father, no room seemed to remain for attempting a revolution, by the young candidates escaping from the mountain. This oblivion to which they were consigned, melancholy as it was, proved the best state these unhappy prisoners could have wished; for to be much known for either good or bad qualities, did always at some period become fatal to the individuals. Punishment always followed inquiries after a particular prince; and all messages, questions, or visits, at the instance of the king, were constantly fore-runners of the loss of life, or amputation of limbs, to these unhappy exiles. To be forgotten, then, was to be safe; but this safety carried very heavy distress along with it. Their revenues were embezzled by their officers or keepers, and ill paid by the king; and the sordid temper of Hannes had often reduced them all to the danger of perishing with hunger and cold.

YASOUS, as he was well acquainted with all these circumstances, so he was, in his nature and disposition, as perfectly willing to repair the injuries that were past, and prevent
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the like in future. Nothing tended so much to conciliate the minds of the people to their sovereign as this behaviour of Yafous.

IN the midst of his relations there now appeared (as risen from the dead) Claudius, son of Socinios, the first exile who was sent to the mountain of Wechnè by his brother Facildas, grandfather of Yafous. This was the prince who, as we have already stated, was fixed upon by the Jesuits to succeed his father, and govern that country when converted to the Romish religion by their intrigues, and conquered by the arms of the Portuguese: This was the prince who, to make their enemies appear more odious, these Jesuits have asserted was slain by his brother Facildas, one instance by which we may judge of the justice of the other charges laid against that humane, wise, and virtuous prince, whose only crime was an inviolable attachment to the religion and constitution of his country, and the just abhorrence he most reasonably had, as an independent prince, to submit the prerogatives of his crown, and the rights of his people to the blind controul of a foreign prelate.

THERE came from the mountain also the sons of Facildas, with their families; and likewise his own brothers, Ayto Theophilus, and Ayto Claudius, sons of his father Hatzè Hannes. The sight of so many noble relations, some advanced in years, some in the flower of their youth, and some yet children; all, however, in ratters, and almost naked, made such an impression on the young king that he burst into tears. Nor was his behaviour to the respective degrees of them less proper or engaging. To the old he paid that reverence and respect due to parents; to those about his

own age, a kind and liberal familiarity; while he bestowed upon the young ones careffes and commendations, sweetened with the hopes that they might fee better times.

HIS first care was to provide them all plentifully with apparel and every neccessary. His brothers he dressed like himself, and his uncles still more richly. He then divided a large sum of money among them all.

IN the month of December, which is the pleasantest season of the whole year, the sun being moderately hot, the sky constantly clear and without a cloud, all the court was encamped under the mountain, and the inferior fort strewn along the grafs. All were treated at the expence of the king, passing the day and night in continual festivals. It is but right, said the king, that I should pay for a pleasure so great that none of my predecessors ever dared to taste it; and of all that noble assembly none seemed to enjoy it more sincerely than the king. All pardons solicited for criminals at this time were granted. In this manner having spent a whole month, before his departure the king called for the deftar, (*i. e.* the treasury book) in which the account of the sum allowed for the maintenance of these prisoners is stated; and having inquired strictly into the expenditure, and cancelled all grants that had been made of any part of that sum to others, and provided in future for the full, as well as yearly payment of it, he, for his last act, gave to the governor of the mountain a large accession of territory, to make him ample amends for the loss of the dues he was understood to be intitled to from that revenue. After this, he embraced them all, assuring them of his constant protection; and, mounting his horse, he took the keep-
er

er along with him, leaving all the royal family at their liberty at the foot of the mountain.

THIS last mark of confidence, more than all the rest, touched the minds of that noble troop, who hurried every man with his utmost speed to restore themselves voluntarily to their melancholy prison, imputing every moment of delay as a step towards treason and ingratitude to their munificent, compassionate, and magnanimous benefactor. All their way was moistened with tears flowing from sensible and thankful hearts; and all the mountain resounded with prayers for the long life and prosperity of the king, and that the crown might never leave the lineal descendants of his family. It was very remarkable, that, during this long reign, though he was constantly involved in war, no competitor from the mountain ever appeared in breach of those vows they had so voluntarily undertaken.

THERE was another great advantage the king reaped by this generous conduct. All the most powerful and considerable people in the kingdom had an opportunity, at one view, to see each individual of the royal family that was capable of wearing the crown, and all with one voice agreed, upon the comparison made, that, if they had been then assembled to elect a king, the choice would not have fallen upon any but the present.

THOUGH the country of the Agows of Damot is generally plain and laid out in pasture, each tribe has some mountain to which, upon the alarm of an enemy, they retire with their flocks. The Galla,* being their neighbours on the other side of the Nile to the south, and the Shangalla in the

low country immediately to the west, these natural fortresses are frequently of the greatest use during the incursions of both.

THEY alone, of all the nations of Abyssinia, have found it their interest so far to cultivate their neighbours the Shangalla, that there are places set apart in which both nations can trade with each other in safety; where the Agows sell copper, iron, beads, skins, or hides, and receive an immense profit in gold; for, below these to the south and west, is the gold country nearest Abyssinia, none of that metal being anywhere found in Abyssinia itself.

YASOUS, from this country of the Agows, descended into that of the Shangalla; where, conforming to the ancient custom of Abyssinia, he hunted the elephant and rhinoceros, the ordinary first expedition in the kings his predecessors reigns, but the second in his; the first having been (as before stated) spent in charity and mercy, much more nobly, at the foot of the mountain of Wechné.

YASOUS is reported to have been the most graceful and dexterous horseman of his time. He distinguished himself in this hunting as much for his address and courage against the beasts, as he had, for a short while before, done by his affability, generosity, and benevolence, amidst his own family. All was praise, all was enthusiasm, wherever the young king presented himself; the ill-boding monks and hermits had not yet dared to foretel evil, but every common mouth predicted this was to be an active, vigorous, and glorious reign, without being thought by this to have laid any pretension to the gift of prophecy.

It was now the second year of his reign when the king took the field with a small, but very well chosen army. The Edjow and Woolo, two of the most powerful tribes of southern Galla, taking advantage of the absence of Ras Anastasius, had entered Amhara by a pass, on the side of which is situated Melec Shimfa, one of the principal towns of the province.

THE king, leaving old Anastasius to the government of Gondar, took upon himself the relief of Amhara; and, being joined by all the troops in his way, he arrived at Melec Shimfa before the Galla had any intelligence of him. The Galla always chose for their residence a very level country, because they are now become all horsemen. The country of Amhara, on the contrary, is full of high mountains, and only accessible by certain narrow passes. The king, therefore, instead of marching directly to the enemy, passed above them, and left them still advancing, burning the villages and churches in the country below. He then took possession of the pass (through which he knew they must retreat) with a strong body of troops; and filled the entrance of the defile, which was very rugged ground, with fusileers, and his best foot armed with lances: after this, he separated his horse into two divisions, and, reserving one half to himself, gave the other to Kasmati Demetrius. He then placed the troops conducted by himself in a wood, about half a mile from the entrance of the pass, and ordered Demetrius to fall upon the Galla briskly on the plain, but to retreat as if terrified by their numbers, and to make the best of his way then to the pass in the mountains.

DEMETRIUS, finding the enemy's parties scattered wide wa-
sting the country, fell upon them, and slew many, till he had
arrived near the middle of their body, when the Galla, used
to such expeditions, poured in from all sides, and presently
united. Demetrius, surrounded on every side, was slain,
fighting to the last in the most desperate manner, and his
party, much diminished in number, fled in a manner that
could not be mistaken for stratagem. They were closely
pursued, and followed into the pass by the Galla, who
thought they had thus entirely cut them off from Amhara.
But they were soon received by a close fire from the foot a-
mong the bushes, and by the lances that mingled with
them from every side of the mountain.

THE king, upon the first noise of the musquetry, advan-
ced quickly with his horse, and met the Galla, in the height
of their confusion, flying back again into the plain. Here
they fell an easy sacrifice to the fresh troops led by Yafous,
and to the peasants, exasperated by the havoc they before
had made in the country. Of the enemy, about 6000 men
fell this day on the field; a few were brought to Gondar,
and, in contempt, sold for slaves. Few on the king's side
were slain, excepting those that fell with Demetrius, the ac-
count of whose death the king heard without any signs of
regret:—"I told the man (says the king) that he should shew
" himself and retire; if I wanted a victory I would have led
" the army in person; I march against the Galla, not as a
" king, but as an executioner, because my aim is to extir-
" pate them."

ALTHOUGH Yafous was stedfast in his own opinion as to
his religion, or, as it may be more properly called, the dis-

putes and quibbles with the monks concerning it, yet he suffered each sect to enjoy its own, and, probably, in his heart he perfectly despised both.

THE monks, however, were far from possessing any such spirit of toleration. They considered the deposing of Acab Saat, Constantius, and the Itchegué Tzaga Christos, as a declaration of dislike the king entertained towards their party. They bore with great impatience and indignation, that Abuna Sanuda, who was once their zealous partizan in the time of Hannes, should now suddenly change his sentiments, and declare implicitly for those of the king, and thereby increase both the number and the consequence of their adversaries. They declared that they would suffer every thing rather than live under a king who shewed himself so openly a favourer of Debra Libanos, though it was now but their turn, having in the last reign had a king more partial, and more attached to St Eustathius, than ever Yafous was to any set of monks whatever.

THE ringleaders in all these seditious declarations were Abba Tebedin, superior of the monastery of Gondga, and Kasmati Wali of Damot, by origin a Galla. These two turbulent men, having first drawn over to their party the Agows and province of Damot, passed over the Nile to Goodero and Basso, whom they joined, and then proclaimed king one Isaac, grandson of Socinios a prince, who was never sent to the mountain, but whose predecessors, being at liberty when Facilidas first banished his brothers and children to Wechné, had fled to the Galla, and there remained in obscurity, waiting the juncture which now happened to declare his royal descent, and offer himself for king.

THE Galla, who fought but a pretence for invading Abyſſinia, readily embraced this opportunity, and ſwarmed to him on all ſides. His army, in a very ſhort time, was exceedingly numerous, and the Agows and all Damot were ready to join him when he ſhould repaſs the Nile. This revolt was indeed likely to have proved general, but for the activity and diligence of the king, who, on the firſt intelligence, put himſelf ſo ſuddenly in motion that he was on the banks of the Nile before the Galla on the one ſide were ready for their junction with the confederates on the other.

THE king's preſence impoſed upon the Agows and the rebels of Damot, ſo that they let him paſs quietly over the Nile into the country of the Galla, hoping that, as their deſigns were not diſcovered, he might again return through their country in peace if victorious over the Galla; but, if he was beaten, they then were ready to intercept him.

But the Galla, who expected that they would have had to fight with an army already fatigued and half-ruined by an action with the Agows on the other ſide of the river, no ſooner ſaw it paſs the Nile unmoleſted in full force, than they began to think how far it was from their intereſt to make their country a ſeat of war, when ſo little profit was to be expected. On the approach, therefore, of the king's army, many of them deſerted to it, and made their peace with him. The few that remained faithful to Iſaac were diſperſed after very little reſiſtance; and he himſelf being taken priſoner, and brought before the king, was given up to the ſoldiers, who put him to death in his preſence. On

the king's side, no person of consideration was slain but Kafmati Maziré, and very few on the part of the enemy.

THIS year 1685, the 5th of Yafous's reign, there was no military expedition. He had pardoned Abba Tebedin, and Kafmati Wali, and the monks again desired an assembly of the clergy, which was granted. But the king seeing, at its first meeting, that it was to produce nothing but wrangling and invectives; with great calmness and resolution told the assembly, "That their disputes were of a nature so confused and unedifying, that he questioned much their being really founded in scripture; and the rather so, because the patriarch of Alexandria seemed neither to know, nor concern himself about them, nor was the Abuna, at his first coming, ever instructed on any one of these points. If they were, however, founded in scripture, one of them was confessedly in the wrong; and, if so, he doubted it might be the case with both; that he had, therefore, come to a resolution to name several of the best-qualified persons of both parties, who, in the presence of the Itcheguè and Abuna, might inspect the books, and from them settle some premises that might be hereafter accepted and admitted as *data* by both."

THIS being assented to, the very next year he ordered two of the priests of Debra Libanos then at Gondar, together with Abba Tebedin, Cosmas of Aruana, the Abuna Sanuda, and the Itcheguè, forthwith to repair to Debra Mariam, an island in the lake Tzana, where, sequestered from the world, they might discuss their several opinions, and settle some points admissible by both sides. After which, without giving any opportunity for reply, he dissolved the assembly, and took the field with his army.

THE king, though perfectly informed of the part that the whole province of Damot had taken in the rebellion of Ifaac, as also great part of the Agows, but most of all that tribe called Zeegam, yet had so well dissembled, that most of them believed he was ignorant of their fault, and all of them, that he had no thoughts of punishing them, for he had returned through Damot, after the defeat of Ifaac, without shewing any mark of anger, or suffering his troops to commit the smallest hostility. He now passed in the same peaceable manner through the country of Zeegam, intending to attack the Shangalla of Geefa and Wumbarea.

THESE two tribes are little known. Like the other Shangalla they are Pagans, but worship the Nile and a certain tree, and have a language peculiar to themselves. They are woolly-headed, and of the deepest black; very tall and strong, straighter and better-made about the legs and joints than the other blacks; their foreheads narrow, their cheekbones high, their noses flat, with wide mouths, and very small eyes. With all this they have an air of cheerfulness and gaiety which renders them more agreeable than other blacks. Their women are very amorous, and sell at a much greater price than other blacks of the sex.

THIS country is bounded on the south by Metchakel; on the west by the Nile; the east by Serako, part of Gueigué and Kuara; and, on the north, by Belay, Guba, and the Hamidge * of Sennaar. They make very frequent inroads,
and

* A name of the black Pagans bordering on Sennaar to the south-west.

and surprise the Agows, whose children they sell at Guba to the Mahometans, who traffic there for gold and slaves, and get iron and coarse cotton-cloths in return. Their country is full of woods, and their manner of life the same as has been already described in speaking of the other tribes.

THE Geefa live close upon the Nile, to which river they give their own name. It is also called Geefa by the Agows, in the small district of Geesh, where it rises from its source. They never have yet made peace with Abyssinia, are governed by the heads of families, and live separately for the sake of hunting, and, for this reason, are easily conquered. The men are naked, having a cotton rag only about their middle. The nights are very cold, and they lie round great fires; but the fly is not so dangerous here as to the eastward, so that goats, in a small number, live here. Their arms are bows, lances, and arrows; large wooden clubs, with knobs, nearly as big as a man's head, at the end of them; their shields are oval. They worship the Nile, but no other river, as I have said before; it is called Geefa, which, in their language, signifies the first Maker, or Creator. They imagine its water is a cure for most diseases.

EAST of the Geefa is Wumbarea, which reaches to Belay. The king fell first on the Geefa, part of whom he took, and the rest he dispersed. He then turned to the right through Wumbarea, and met with some resistance in the narrow passes in the mountains, in one of which Kasimati Kollé, (one of his principal officers) a man of low birth, but raised by his merit to his present rank, was slain by an arrow.

THE king then repassed the Agows of Zeegam, in the same peaceable manner in which he came, and then marched on without giving any cause of suspicion, taking up his quarters at Ibaba. It was here he had appointed an assembly of the clergy to meet, before whom the several delegates, chosen to consider the controverted points, and find some ground for a reconciliation, were to make their report. The Abuna, Itchegué, and all those who, for this purpose, were shut up in Debra Mariam, appeared before the king. But, however amicably things had been carried on while they were shut up in the island, the usual warmth and violence prevailed before the assembly. Ayto Christos, Abba Welled Christos of Debra Libanos, on one side, and Tebedin and Cosmas on the other, fell roundly, and without preface, upon a dispute about the incarnation, so that the affair from argument was likely to turn to sedition.

THE turbulent Tebedin, leaving the matter of religion wholly apart, inveighed vehemently against the retirement to Debra Mariam, which he loudly complained of as banishment. Ras Anastasius and Abuna Sanuda reproved him sharply for the freedom with which he taxed this measure of the king, and in this they were followed by many of the wiser sort on both sides. Immediately after the assembly, the king ordered Tebedin to be put in irons, and sent to a mountainous prison. He then returned to Gondar.

THIS year, the 9th of Yafous reign, there appeared a comet, remarkable for its size and fiery brightness of its body, and for the prodigious length and distinctness of its tail. It

was

was first taken notice of at Gondar, two days before the feast of St Michael, on which day the army takes the field. A sight so uncommon alarmed all sorts of people; and the prophets, who had kept themselves within very moderate bounds during this whole reign, now thought that it was incumbent upon them to distinguish themselves, and be silent no longer. Accordingly they foretold, from this phenomenon, and published everywhere as a truth infallibly and immutably pre-ordained, that the present campaign was to exhibit a scene of carnage and bloodshed, more terrible and more extensive than any thing that ever had appeared in the annals of Ethiopia. That these torrents of blood, which were everywhere to follow the footsteps of the king, were to be stopped by his death, which was to happen before he ever returned again to Gondar; and, as the object of the king's expedition was still a secret, these alarming presages gained a great deal of credit.

BUT it was not so with Yafous, who, notwithstanding he was importuned, by learned men of all sorts, to put off his departure for some days, absolutely refused, answering always such requests by irony and derision: "Pho! Pho!" says he, you are not in the right; we must give the comet fair play; use him well, or he will never appear again, and then idle people and old women will have nothing to amuse themselves with."

HE accordingly left Gondar at the time he had appointed; and he was already arrived at Amdaber, a few days distance from the capital, when an express brought him word of his mother's death, on which he immediately marched back to Gondar, and buried her in the island of Mitraha with all

possible magnificence, and with every mark of sincere grief.

THOUGH the prophets had not just succeeded in what they foretold, they kept nevertheless a good countenance. It is true that no blood was shed, nor did the king die before he returned to Gondar; but his mother died when he was away, and that was much the same thing, for they contended that it was not a great mistake, from the bare authority of a comet, to err only in the sex of the person that was to die; a queen for a king was very near calculation. As for the bloody story, and the king's death, they said they had mistaken the year in computing, but that it still was to happen (when it pleased God) *some other time*.

EVERY body agreed that these explanations were the best possible, excepting the king, who perceived a degree of malice in the foretelling his death and certain loss of his army just at the instant he was taking the field. But he disguised his resentment under strong irony, with which he attacked these diviners incessantly. He had inquired accurately the day of his mother's death: "How is it, says he to his chaplain, (or kees hatzé) that this comet should come to *foretel* my mother's death, when she was dead four days before it appeared?" Another day, to the same person he said, "I fear you do my mother too much honour at the expence of religion. Is it decent to suppose that such a star, the most remarkable appearance at the birth of Christ, should now be employed on no greater errand than to foretel the death of the daughter of Guebra Mascal?" These, and many more such railleries, accounted by these visionaries,

aries, as little short of impiety, so mortified Koftè (the kees hatzé,) a great believer in, and protector of the dreamers, that he resigned all his employments, and retired among the hermits into the desert of Werk-lewa towards Sennaar, to study the aspects of the stars more accurately, and more at leisure.

THOUGH we neither pay this comet the superstitious reverence the idle fanatics of Abyssinia shewed it, nor yet treat it with that contempt which this great king's good sense prompted him to do, we shall make some use of it, acknowledging our gratitude to the historian who has recorded it. We shall hereby endeavour to establish our chronology in opposition to that of the catholic writers, relating to the date of some transactions with which they were not cotemporaries, and only relate from hearsay, as happening before the arrival of the missionaries in this country.

YASOUS the Great, of whom we are now writing, came to the throne upon the death of his father Hannes in 1680; the 9th year of this reign then was 1689.

HEDAR is the 3d month of the Abyssinians, and answers to part of our November; and the 12th of that month, Hedar, is the feast of St Michael the archangel, or 8th day of our month November, N. S.

GONDAR is in lat. $12^{\circ} 34' 30''$ N. and in long. $37^{\circ} 33' 0''$ E from the meridian of Greenwich. By the fiery appearance of the nucleus, or body of the comet, it certainly then was very near the sun, and either was going down upon it to its

perihelion, or had already passed it, and was receding to its aphelion ; but by its increasing tail, already at a great length, we may conjecture it was only then going down to its conjunction, and was then near approaching to the sun.

FROM this we should conclude that this comet must have been seen, however rapidly it did move, some time before the 6th of November, or two days before the feast of St Michael. But this depends on the circumstances of the climate ; for though the tropical rains cease the first of September, the cloudy weather continues all the month of October ; at the end of these fall the latter rains in gentle showers, which allay the fevers in Dembea, and make the country wholesome for the march of the army, and these rains fall mostly in the night. From this it is probable that the comet, having at first little light and no tail, as yet at a distance from the sun, was not very apparent to the naked eye, till by its increased motion and heat it had acquired both tail and brightness, as it approached its perihelion.

Now we find by our European accounts *, that, in the year 1689, there did appear a comet, the orbit of which was calculated by M. Pingrè. And this comet arrived at its perihelion on the 1st day of December 1689, so was going down much inflamed, and with a violent motion to the sun, the 6th of November, when it was observed at Gondar, being but 25 days then from its perihelion.

As these circumstances are more than sufficient to constitute the identity of the comet, a phenomenon too rare to
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* *Astronom. de M. de La Lande*, liv. 19. p. 366.

risk being confounded with another, we may hardly conclude the 9th year of Yafous the First to be the year 1689 of Christ, such as our chronology, drawn from the Abyssinian annals, states it to be ; or, at least, if there is any error, it must be so small as to be of no sort of consequence to any sort of readers, or influence upon the narrative of any transactions.

THE 10th year began with a sudden and violent alarm, which spread itself in an instant all over the kingdom without any certain authority. The Galla with an innumerable army were said to have entered Gojam, at several places, and laid waste the whole province, and this was the more extraordinary, as the Nile was now in the height of its inundation. On his march, the king learned that this story arose merely from a panic ; and this formidable army turned out no more than a small band of robbers of that nation, who had passed the river in their usual way, part on horseback, while the foot were dragged over, hanging at the horses tails, or riding on goats skins blown up with wind. This small party had surprized some weak villages, killed the inhabitants, and immediately returned across the river. But the alarm continued, and there were people at Gondar who were ready to swear they saw the villages and churches on fire, and a large army of Galla in their march to Ibaba, at the same time that there was not one Galla on the Gojam side of the river.

THE king, however, either considering this small body of Galla coming at this unseasonable time, and the panic that was so artificially spread, as a feint to throw him off his guard when a real invasion might be intended, or with a

view to cover his own designs, summoned all the men of the province of Gojam to meet him in arms at Ibaba the 7th day of January, being the proper season for preparing an expedition into the country of the Galla. He himself in the mean time retired to Dek, an island in the lake Tzana, there to stay till his army should be collected.

WHILE the king was in the island, a number of the malcontents among the monks, who had, in the several assemblies, been banished for sedition with Tebedin, came to him there, desiring to be heard before an assembly; and they brought with them Arca Denghel, of Debra Samayat, to support their petition. The king answered, that he was ready to call an assembly, provided the Abuna desired, or would promise to be present; but that the Abuna was then at Debra Mariam, where they might go and know his mind.

THE Abuna, who foresaw little good could be expected from such meetings, and knew how disagreeable they were to the king, absolutely refused to attend. On this they returned again to the king, desiring that, of his own mere prerogative, he would call their assembly without consulting further the Abuna. To this the king answered boldly, That he knew it was his right to call his subjects together, without any other reason for so doing but his will; yet, when the avowed cause of the meeting was to canvass matters of faith, he had made it a rule to himself, that the Abuna should always be present, or at least consent to the meeting. And with this answer he ordered them all to depart immediately.

MANY of the principal people about the king advised him to put these turbulent people in irons, for daring to come into his presence without leave. But Yafous was contented to remand each to the place of his banishment from whence he came. He then removed from Dek to Ibaba, on the 10th of January, the journey being no more than two easy days; but, whether it was that the Galla did not intend another invasion, or whether they were overawed by the king's preparations and presence, and did not think themselves safe even in their own country, none of them this year passed the Nile, or gave any uneasiness either to Gojam or Damot.

THOUGH the whole nation believed that the king's attention was entirely engaged in the various expeditions against the Galla and Shangalla, which he executed with so much diligence and success, yet there was still a principal object superior to all these, which remained a secret in his own breast, after the parties concerned had absolutely forgot it. All his campaigns against the Shangalla were only designed to lull asleep those he considered as his principal enemies, that he might make the blow he aimed at them more certain and effectual.

SIX years had now passed since the Agows, and particularly the most powerful tribe of them, the Zeegam, had, with those of Damot and the Galla, conspired to put the crown upon the head of the rebel prince Isaac, who had lost his life in the engagement which followed on the other side of the Nile. It will be remembered also, that the country of the Agows is in general open, full of rich plains, abundantly watered by variety of fine streams; in other parts, gentle
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ridings

rifings and descents, but without mountains, saving that, almost in every tribe, Nature had placed one rugged mountain to which these people retired upon the approach of their neighbouring enemies the Galla and Shangalla. This description does, in a more extensive manner, belong to the country of the Zeegam, the most powerful, rich, and trading tribe of the whole nation.

Not one single mountain, but a considerable ridge, divides the country nearly in the middle, the bottom of which, and nearly one-third up, is covered with brush-wood, full of stiff bamboos and canes, bearing prickly fruit, with aloes, acacia very thorny, and of several dwarf shrubby kinds, interspersed with the kantuffa *, a beautiful thorn, which alone is considered, where it grows thick and in abundance, as a sufficient impediment for the march of a royal army. Through these are paths known only to the inhabitants themselves, which lead you to the middle of the mountain, where are large caves, probably begun by Nature, and afterwards enlarged by the industry of man. The mouths of these are covered with bushes, canes, and wild oats, that grow so as to conceal both man and horse, while the tops of these mountains are flat and well-watered, and there they sow their grain out of the reach of the enemy. Upon the first alarm they drive the cattle to the top, lodge their wives and children in the caves, and, when the enemy approaches near, they hide the cattle in the caves likewise, some of which cavities are so large as to hold 500 oxen, and all the people to which they belong. The men then go down to the
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* See the article *kantuffa* in the Appendix.

the lowest part of the mountain, from whose thickets they fall, upon every opportunity that presents itself, to attack the enemy whom they find marauding in the plains.

THE king had often assembled his army at Ibaba, only four days march from Zeegam. He had done more; he had passed below the country, and returned by the other side of it, in his attack upon Geefa and Wumbarea; but he had never committed any act of hostility, nor shewn himself discontented with them. To deceive them still farther, he ordered now his army to meet him at Eflé in Begemder; and sent to Kasmati Claudius, governor of Tigrè, to join him with all his forces as soon as he should hear he was arrived at Lama, a large plain before we descend the steep mountain of Lamalmon, which stands not far from the banks of the river Tacazzé. He privately gave orders also to Kasmati Claudius, Kasmati Dimmo Christos of Tigrè, and to Adera and Quaquera Za Menfus Kedus, to inform themselves where the water lay below, and whether there was enough for his army in Betcoom, for so they call the territory of the eastern branch of Shangalla adjoining to Siré and Tigré. By this manœuvre the enemy was deceived, as the most intelligent thought he was to attack Lasta, and the others, that knew the secret of the water, were sure his march was against the Shangalla.

THE king began his march from Ibaba, and crossed the Nile at the second cataract below Dara, where there is a bridge; and, entering Begemder, he joined his army at Eflé, which was going in a route directly from Agow and Damot towards Lasta. But no sooner was he arrived at Eflé, than, that very night, he suddenly turned back the way he

came, and, marching through Maitſha, he crossed the Nile, for the second time, at Goutto, above the first cataract.

THE morning of the 3d of May, the sixth day of forced marches, without having encamped the whole way, he entered Zeegam at the head of his army. He found the country in perfect security, both people and cattle below on the plains and in the villages; and having put all to the sword who first offered themselves, and the principal of the conspirators being taken prisoners, he sold their wives and children at a public auction for slaves to the highest bidder. He then took the principal men among them along with him for security for paying six years tribute which they were in arrears, fined them 6000 oxen, which he ordered to be delivered upon the spot; and then collecting his army, he sent to the chiefs of Damot to meet him before he entered their territory, and to bring security with them for the fine he intended to lay upon them, otherwise he would destroy their country with fire and sword; and he advanced the same day to Allſoa, south of the sources of the Nile, divided only from Damot by the ridge of mountains of Amid Amid.

THE people of Damot, inhabiting an open level country without defence, had no choice but to throw themselves on the king's mercy, who fined them 500 ounces of gold and 100 oxen, and took the principal people with him in irons as hostages.

HE then returned, leaving the sources of the Nile on his right, through Dengui, Fagitta, and Aroofi; crossed the river Kelti, having the Agow and Atcheſſer on his left, and returned

turned to Gondar by Dingleber. He then gave 2000 cattle to the churches of Tecla Haimanout and Yaious, being nearest the king's palace, to the Ichegué Hannes, the judges and principal servants of his household, to all a share, without reserving one to himself. And the rains being now very constant, (for it was the 25th of June) he resolved to continue the rest of the winter in Gondar to regulate the affairs of the church.

THIS year the king resumed his expedition against the Shangalla, towards which he had taken several preparatory steps, while he was projecting the surprize of the Zeegam. These are the Troglodytes on the eastern part of Abyssinia, towards the Red Sea, south of Walkayt, Sire, Tigré, and Baharnagash, till they are there cut off by the mountains of the Habab. These, the most powerful of all their tribes, are comprehended under the general name of *Debenab*; the tribe Baafa, which we have already spoken of as occupying the banks of the Tacazzé, are the only partners they have in the peninsula formed by that river and the Mareb. Their country and manner of life have been already abundantly described. It is all called Kolla, in opposition to Daga, which is the general name of the mountainous parts of Abyssinia.

THE king, being informed by Kasmati Claudius that there was water in great plenty at Betcoom, marched from Gondar the 29th of October to Deba, thence to Kossloguè, after to Tamama. He then turned to the left to a village called Sidrè, nearer to the Shangalla. From this station he forbade the lighting fires in the camp, and took the road leading to the Mareb; then turning to the left, the 1st of December he surprized a village called Kunya. The king

was the first who began the attack, and was in great danger, as Mazmur, captain of his guard, was killed by a lance at his side. But the soldiers rushing in upon sight of the king's situation, who had already slain two with his own hand, the village was carried, and the inhabitants put to the sword, refusing all to fly, and fighting obstinately to the last gasp.

FROM Kunya the king proceeded rapidly to Tzaada Amba*, the largest and most powerful settlement of these favages. They have no water but what they get from the river Mareb, which, as I have elsewhere observed, rises above Dobarwa, and, after making the circle of that town, loses itself soon after in the sand for a space, then appears again, and, after a short course, hides itself a second time to the N. E. near the Taka, whose wells it supplies with fresh water. But in the rainy months it runs with a full stream, in a wide and deep bed, and unites itself to the Tacazzé, with it making the northernmost point of the ancient island of Meröë.

THE king met the same success at Tzaada Amba that he had before experienced at Kunya, at which last village he passed the feast of the epiphany and benediction of the waters; a ceremony annually observed both by the Greek and Abyssinian church, the intent of which has been strangely mistaken by foreigners.

FROM

* The white mountain.

FROM Kunya, his head-quarters, Yafous attacked the several nations of which this is, as it were, the capital, Zacobä, Fadè, Qualquou, and Sahalé, and he returned again to Tzaada Amba, resolving to complete their destruction. The remains of these miserable people, finding resistance vain, had hid themselves in inaccessible caves in the mountains, and the thickest parts of the woods, where they lay perfectly concealed in the day-time, and only stole out when thirst obliged them at night. The king, who knew this, and that they had no other water but what they brought from the Mareb, formed a strong line of troops along the banks of that river, till the greatest part of the Shangalla of Tzaada Amba died with thirst, or were taken or slain by the army.

His next enterprize was to attempt Betcoom, a large habitation of Shangalla east of the Mareb, whose number, strength, and reputation for courage, had hitherto prevented the Abyssinians from molesting them, never having touched, unless the farthest skirts of their country. The names of their tribes inhabiting Betcoom are, Baigada, Dadé, Ketcè, Kicklada, Moleraga, Megaerbé, Gana, Selé, Hamta, Shalada, Elmsi, and Lentè. The small river of Lidda falling from a high precipice, when swelled with the winter rains, hollows out deep and large reservoirs below, which it leaves full of water when the rains cease, so that these people are here as well supplied with water as those that dwell on the large rivers the Mareb and Tacazzè. This was a circumstance unknown, till this sagacious and provident king ordered the place to be reconnoitred by Kafmati Claudius, then marched and encamped on the river

Lidda, which, after a short but violent course, falls into the Mareb.

THE Shangalla of Betcoom did nothing worthy of their reputation or numbers. They had already procured intelligence of the fate of great part of their nation, and had dispersed themselves in unknown and desolate places. The king, however, made a considerable number of slaves of the younger sort, and killed as many of the rest as fell into his hands.

LEAVING Betcoom, the army proceeded still eastward; passed through the mountains of the Habab, into the low level country which runs parallel to the Red Sea, at the base of these mountains, where he spent several days hunting the elephant, some of which he slew with his own hand, and turned then to the left to Amba Tchou * and Taka.

THE Taka are a nation of Shepherds living near the extremity of the rains. They are not Arabs, but live in villages, and were part formerly of the Bagla, or Habab; they speak the language of Tigré, and are now reputed part of the kingdom of Sennaar.

WHILE the king was at Taka, he received the disagreeable news, that, after he had left the Shangalla on the Mareb, Mustapha Gibberti, a Mahometan soldier in the service of Kasmati Fafa Christos of Dedgin, had, with a small number of men, ventured down, thinking that he should surprise

* The mountain of salt.

prize the Shangalla of Tzaada Amba, before they recovered from their late misfortune. This Muflapha had slain two or three Shangalla with fire-arms; and at first they stood aloof as fearing the king. But finding soon that it was no part of his army, and only a small body of adventurers, the Shangalla 'now collected in numbers, surrounded Muflapha and his party, whom they cut off to a man; and, pursuing their advantage, they entered and took Dedgin, wounded Kafmati Fafa Christos, and put the inhabitants of the town to the sword.

News of this misfortune were carried speedily to Kafmati Claudius, governor of Tigré: Cassem, a Mahometan, led the Gibbertis, the people of that religion in the province; and, as he was an advanced party, came speedily to blows with the Shangalla, and was closely engaged, with great appearance of success, when Claudius came up with an army that would soon have put an end to the contest. But no sooner was his army engaged with the Shangalla, than a panic seized him, and he founded a retreat; which, in an instant, became a most shameful flight. Cassem and his gibbertis fell, fighting to the last man in the middle of their enemies. The Shangalla followed their advantage, and great part of the Abylilian army perished in the flight; Claudius, tho' he escaped, left his standard, kettle-drums, and his whole province in possession of the enemy.

THE king, upon hearing this, returned hastily into Siré; and his presence established order and tranquillity in that province, already half abandoned for fear of the Shangalla. From Siré the king proceeded to Axum, where he celebrated

his victories over the Shangalla, by several days of feasting and thanksgiving.

IN the midst of this rejoicing, news were brought that Murat, a servant of the king, whom he had dispatched to India with merchandise, to bring such commissions as he stood in need of, was arrived at Masuah, where Mufa the Naybe, or Turkish governor of the island, had detained him, and seized his goods, under some vexatious pretences. There is not indeed a more merciless, thievish set of miscreants, than in that government of Masuah. But the king knew too well the few resources that island had, to be long in applying a remedy, without moving from Axum; after being fully informed of the affair, in all its circumstances, by Murat, he sent to Abba Salucc, Guebra Christos, and Zarabrook of Hamazen, the governors of the districts, that as it were surround Masuah, prohibiting all, upon pain of death, to suffer any provisions to be carried by any person whatever into the island of Masuah.

A SEVERE famine instantly followed, which was to terminate in certain death, before any relief could come to them, unless from Abyssinia. The Naybe Mufa, therefore, found into what a terrible scrape he had got; but hunger did not leave him a moment to deliberate. No third way remained, but either he must see the king, or die; and without hesitation he chose the former. He, therefore, set out for Axum, bringing with him Murat and all the merchandises he had seized, as also several very considerable presents for Yafous himself, who accepted them, received his submission, and ordered the communication with Abyssinia to be open
as

as before. This done, he dismissed the Naybe, who returned to Mafuah in peace.

THE next affair that came before the king was that of Kasmati Claudius, (governor of Tigré) who was accused and found guilty of having fled while the battle with the Shangalla was yet undecided, leaving his standard and kettledrums in the power of the enemy. Besides his present misbehaviour, strong prejudice existed against him, drawn from his former character; for it was averred, from very credible authority, that on one occasion, upon a very slender appearance of sedition, he ordered his troops to fire upon several priests of Axum, some of whom were killed on the spot. Besides which, in the reign of Hatzc Hannes, he was found guilty of capital crimes committed at Emfras, condemned to die, and was already hanging upon the tree, when a very seasonable reprieve arrived from the king, and he was thereupon cut down whilst yet alive. Yafous contented himself with depriving him of his employment, and afterwards sending him to perpetual banishment.

THE next brought to their trial were Za Woldo, and Adlera and his sons. These last were very near relations to the king, for they were sons of Ozoro Keduset Christos, daughter of Facilidas. They were accused of having deserted their country and left it waste to be over-run by wild beasts, and a rendezvous for the Shangalla, who thence extended their incursions as far as Waldubba. Of this there was ample proof against them, and they were therefore sentenced to die, but the king commuted their punishment in-

to that of being imprifoned for life in a cave in the ifland of Dek.

As for the province of Sirè itfelf, he declared all the inhabitants and nobility, degraded from their rank, and all lands, whether feus from the king, or held by any other tenure, were confiscated, refumed by, and re-united to the crown. He then reduced the whole province from a royal government to a private one, and annexed it to the province of Tigrè, whose governor was to place over it a fhum, or petty officer, without any enfigns of power. And, laft of all, he gave the government of Tigrè to the Ras Feres, or mafter of the horfe, in room of Kafmati Claudius degraded and banifhed.

THE many ftriking examples which the king had lately given, one clofe upon the other, of his own personal bravery, his impartial juftice, his fecrecy in his expeditions, and the certain vengeance that followed where it was deferved, his punifhment of the Zeegam, his expedition againft the Shangalla, his affair with the Naybe Mufa, and his behaviour to the cowardly Claudius and daftardly nobility of Sirè, fully convinced his fubjects of all degrees, that neither family, nor being related to the crown, nor the ftrength of their country, nor length of time fince they offended, nor indeed any thing but a return to and continuance in their duty, could give them fecurity under fuch a prince. Thus ended the campaign of the Dobenah, fpoke of to this day in Abyffinia as the greateft warlike atchievement of any of their kings. Twenty-fix thoufand men are faid to have perifhed by thirft when the king took poffeffion of the water at Tzaada Amba. And yet, notwithstanding the fmall-pox which,

which, in some places, exterminated whole tribes, the Dobe-nah have not lost an inch of territory, but seem rather to be gaining upon Sirè.

YASOUS arrived at Dancaz on the 8th of March 1692, having dismissed his army as he passed Gondar. From Dancaz he went to Lafla, and after a short stay there, came to Arringo in Begemder. At this place the king received accounts that far exceeded his expectations, and gratified his warmest wishes. He had long endeavoured to gain a party among the Galla to divide them; and, though no marks of success had yet followed, he still had continued to use his endeavours.

ON his arrival at Arringo, he was met by a chief of the southern Galla, called Kal-kend, who brought him advice that, while he was busy with the Shangalla, an irruption had been made into Amhara by the Galla tribes of Liban and Toluma; that they, the king's friends, had come up with them at Halka, fought with them, and beat them, and freed Amhara entirely from all apprehension. The king, exceedingly rejoiced to see his most inveterate enemies become the defenders of his country, ordered the governor of Amhara to pay the Kal-kend 500 webs of cotton-cloth, 500 loads of corn, and escort both the men and the present till they were safely delivered in their own country.

THE 30th of June the king arrived at Gondar from Arringo, and immediately summoned an assembly of the clergy to meet and receive a letter from the patriarch of Alexandria, brought by Abba Mafmur of Agde, and Abba Dioscuros of Maguena, who were formerly sent to Egypt to

ask the patriarch why he displaced Abuna Christodulus, and appointed Abba Sanuda in his room, and desiring that Abba Marcus should be made Abuna, and Sanuda deposed. The clergy met very punctually, and the patriarch's letter was produced in the assembly, the seal examined, and declared to be the patriarch's, and unbroken. The letter being opened by the king's order, it contained the patriarch's mandate to depose Abba Sanuda, and to put Marcus Abuna in his place, which was immediately done by command of the king.

WHILE Yafous was thus busied in directing the affairs of his kingdom with great wisdom and success, both in church and state, a matter was in agitation, unknown to him, at a distance from his dominions, which had a tendency to throw them again into confusion.

TOWARDS the end of the last century, there was settled at Cairo a number of Italian missionaries of the reformed Order of St Francis, who, though they lived in the same convent, and were maintained at the expence of the fathers of the Holy Land, yet did they still pretend to be independent of the guardian of Jerusalem, the superior of these latter.

THE expence of their maintenance, joined with their pretensions to independence, gave great offence to those religious of the Holy Land, who thereupon carried their complaints to Rome, offering to be at the whole charge of the mission of Egypt, and to furnish from their own society subjects capable of attending to, and extending the Christian faith. This offer met with the desired success at Rome. The mission of Egypt, to the exclusion of every other

other Order, was given to the fathers of Jerufalem, or the Holy Land, whom we fhall henceforth call Capuchin friars. Thefe capuchins loft no time, but immediately difmiffed the reformed Francifcans, whom we fhall hereafter diftinguifh by the name of Francifcans, fuffering only two of that Order to remain at Cairo.

THE Francifcans, thus banifhed, returned all to Rome, and there, for feveral years together, openly defended their own caufe, infifting upon the juftice of their being replaced in the exercife of their ancient functions. This, however, they found abfolutely impoffible. They were a poor Order, and the intereft of the capuchins had ftopped every avenue of the facred college againft them. Finding, therefore, that fair and direct means could not accomplifh their ends, they had recourfe to others not fo commendable, and by thefe they fucceeded, and obtained their purpofe. They pretended that, when the Jefuits were chafed out of Abyffinia, a great number of Catholics, avoiding the perfecution, had fled into the neighbouring countries of Sennaar and Nubia; that they ftill remained, moft meritorioufly preferring their faith amidft the very great hardships inflicted upon them by the infidels; but that, under thefe hardships, they muft foon turn Mahometans, unlefs fpiritual affiftance was fpeedily fent them.

THIS representation, as totally void of truth as ever fable was, was confirmed by the two Francifcans, who ftill remained at Cairo by permiffion of the capuchins, or fathers of the Holy Land; and, when afterwards publifhed at Rome, it excited the zeal of every bigot in Italy. All interefted themfelves in behalf of thefe imaginary Chriftians of Nubia;

bia ; and pope Innocent XII. was so convinced of the truth of the story, as to establish a considerable fund to support the expence of this, now called the Ethiopic mission, the sole conduct of which remains still with the reformed Franciscans.

To take care of these fugitive Christians of Nubia, though it was the principal, yet it was not the only charge committed to the fathers of his mission. They were to penetrate into Abyssinia, and keep the seeds of the Romish faith alive there until a proper time should present itself for converting the whole kingdom.

IN order to this, a large convent was bought for them at Achmim, the ancient Panopolis in Upper Egypt, that here they might be able to afford a refreshment to such of their brethren as should return weary and exhausted by their preaching among the Nubian confessors ; and, for further assistance, they had permission to settle two of their Order at Cairo, independent of the fathers of the Holy Land, notwithstanding the former exclusion.

SUCH is the state of this mission at the present time. No Nubian Christians ever existed at the time of their establishment, nor is there one in being at this day. But if their proselytes have not increased, their convents have. Achmim, Fushout, Badjoura, and Negadè are all religious houses belonging to this mission, although I never yet was able to learn, that either Heretic, or Pagan, or Mahometan, was so converted as to die in the Christian faith at any one of these places ; nor have they been much troubled with relieving their brethren, worn out with the toils of Abyssinian

Abyssinian journeys, none of them, as far as I know, having ever made one step towards that country; nor is this indeed to be regretted by the republic of letters, because, besides a poor stock of scholastic divinity, not one of them that I saw had either learning or abilities to be of the smallest use either in religion or discovery.

It was now the most brilliant period of the reign of Louis XIV. almost an Augustan age, and generally allowed so, both in France and among foreigners. Men of merit, of all countries and professions, felt the effects of the liberality of this great encourager of learning; public works were undertaken, and executed superior to the boasted ones of Greece or Rome, and a great number and variety of noble events constituted a magnificent history of his reign, in a series of medals. Religion alone had yet afforded no hint for these. His conduct in this matter, instead of that of a hero, shewed him to be a blind, bloody, merciless tyrant, madly throwing down in a moment, with one hand, what he had, with the assistance of great ministers, been an age in building with the other. The Jesuits, zealous for the honour of the king, their great protector, thought this a time to step in and wipe away the stain. With this view they set upon forwarding a scheme, which might have furnished a medal superior to all the rest, had its inscription been, "The Kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts."

FATHER Fleuriau, a friend of father de la Chaise, the king's confessor, was employed to direct the consul of Cairo, that he should, in co-operation with the Jesuits privately, send a fit person into Abyssinia, who might inspire the king of that country with a desire of sending an embassy into

France, and, upon the management of this political affair, they founded their hopes of getting themselves replaced in the mission they formerly enjoyed, and of again superseding their rivals the Franciscans, in directing all the measures to be taken for that country's conversion. But this required the utmost delicacy, for it was well known, that the court of Rome was very much indisposed towards them, imputing to their haughtiness, implacability, and imprudence, the loss of Abyssinia. Their conduct in China, where they tolerated idolatrous rites to be blended with Christian worship, began also now to be known, and to give the greatest scandal to the whole church. It was, therefore, necessary to make the king declare first in their favour before they began to attempt to conciliate the pope.

LOUIS took upon him the protection of this mission with all the readiness the Jesuits desired; and the Jesuit Verseau was sent immediately to Rome, with strong letters to cardinal Janfen, protector of France, who introduced him to the pope.

VERSEAU knew well the consequence of the protection with which he was honoured. At his first audience he declared, in a very firm voice and manner, to the pope, that the king had resolved to take upon himself the conduct of the Ethiopic mission, and that he had cast his eyes upon them (the Jesuits) as the fittest persons to be entrusted with the care of it, for *reasons best known to himself*. The pope dissembled; he extolled, in the most magnificent terms, the king's great zeal for the advancement of religion, approved of the choice he had made of the Jesuits, and praised their resolution as highly acceptable to him, immediately

ly consenting that Verseau, and five other Jesuits, should without delay pass into Abyssinia.

BUT it very soon appeared, that, however this might be the language of the pope, nothing could be more remote from his intentions ; for, without the knowledge of the Jesuits, or any way consulting them, he appointed the superior of the Franciscans to be his legate a latere to the king of Abyssinia, and provided him with presents to that prince, and the chief noblemen of his court.

SOME time afterwards, when, to prevent strife or concurrence, the Jesuits applied to the pope to receive his directions which of the two should first attempt to enter Abyssinia, the Franciscans, or their own Order, the pope answered shortly, That it should be those who were most expert. Whether this apparent indisposition of his Holiness intimidated Verseau is not known ; but, instead of going to Cairo, he went to Constantinople, thence to Syria, to a convent of his Order of which he was superior, and there he staid. So that the Ethiopic mission at Cairo remained in the hands of two persons of different Orders, the one Paschal, an Italian Franciscan friar, the other a Jesuit and Frenchman, whose name was Brevedent.

BREVEDENT was a person of the most distinguished piety and probity, zealous in promoting his religion, but neither imprudent nor rash in his demonstrations of it ; affable in his carriage, chearful in his disposition, of the most profound humility and exemplary patience. Besides this, he was reputed a man of good taste and knowledge in profane learning, and, what crowned all, an excellent mathe-

matician. He seems indeed to me to have been a copy of the famous Peter Paez, who first gave an appearance of stability to the Portuguese conversion of Abyssinia; like him he was a Jesuit, but of a better nation, and born in a better age.

I must here likewise take notice of what I have already hinted, that in Abyssinia the character of ambassador is not known. They have no treaties of peace or commerce with any nation in the world: But, for purposes already mentioned, factors are employed; and, Abyssinia being everywhere surrounded by Mahometans, these of course have the preference; and, as they carry letters from their masters, the custom of the East obliges them to accompany these with presents to the sovereigns of the respective kingdoms through which they pass, and this circumstance dignifies them with the title of ambassador in the several courts at which they have business. Such was Musa, a factor of the king, whom we have seen detained, and afterwards delivered by the Naybe of Masuah, not many years before, in this king's reign; and such also was Hagi Ali, then upon his master's business at Cairo, when M. de Maillet was consul there, and had received his instructions from father Fleuriau at Paris, to bring about this embassy from Abyssinia.

BESIDES his other business, Hagi Ali had orders to bring with him a physician, if possible, from Cairo; for Yafous and his eldest son were both of a scorbutic habit, which threatened to turn into a leprosy. Hagi Ali, in former voyages, had been acquainted with a capuchin friar Paschal; and, having received medicines from him before, he now applied to Paschal to return with him into Abyssinia, and

and undertake the cure of the king. Paschal very readily complied with this, upon condition that he should be allowed to take for his companion a monk of his own Order, friar Anthony ; to which Hagi Ali readily consented, happy in being enabled to carry two physicians to his master instead of one.

THE French consul was soon informed of this treaty with the friar Paschal ; and, having very easy means to bring Hagi Ali to his house, he informed him, that neither Paschal nor Anthony were physicians, but that he himself had a man of his own nation, whose merit he extolled beyond any thing that had hitherto been said of Hippocrates or Galen. Hagi Ali very willingly accepted of the condition, and it was agreed that, as Verseau had not appeared, Brevedent above mentioned should attend the physician as his servant.

THIS physician was Charles Poncet, a Frenchman, settled in Cairo, who was (as Mr Maillet says) bred a chymist and apothecary, and, if so, was necessarily better skilled in the effects and nature of medicine than those are who call themselves physicians, and practise in the east. Nothing against his private character was intimated by the consul at this time ; and, with all deference to better judgment, I must still think, that if Poncet did deserve the epithets of drunkard, liar, babbler, and thief, which Maillet abundantly bestows upon him towards the end of this adventure, the consul could not have chosen a more improper person as the representative of his master, nor a more probable one to make the design he had in hand miscarry ; nor could he, in this case, ever vindicate the preventing Paschal's journey, who must have been much fitter for all the em-

ployments intended than such a man as Poncet was, if one half is true of that which the consul said of him afterwards.

MAILLET, having so far succeeded, prevailed upon one Ibrahim Hanna, a Syrian, to write five letters, according to his own ideas, in the Arabic language, one of which was to the king, the four others to the principal officers at the court of Abyssinia: doubting, however, whether Ibrahim's expressions were equal to the sublimity of his sentiments, he directed him to submit the letters to the consideration of one Francis, a monk, capuchin, or friar of the Holy Land. Ibrahim knew not this capuchin; but he was intimate with another Francis of the reformed Franciscan Order, and to him by mistake he carried the letters.

THESE Franciscans were the very men from whom Mr de Maillet would have wished to conceal the sending Poncet with the Jesuit Brevedent; but the secret being now revealed, Ibrahim Hanna was discharged the French service for this mistake; and Hagi Ali departing immediately after with Poncet and Brevedent, no time remained for the Franciscans to take the steps they afterwards did to bring about the tragedy in the person of Poncet, which they completely effected in that of Mr Noir du Roule.

Mr PONCET, furnished with a chest of medicines at the expence of the factory, accompanied by father Brevedent, who, in quality of his servant, now took the name of Joseph, joined Hagi Ali, and the caravan destined in the first place, to Sennaar the capital of Nubia.

PONCET set out from Cairo on the 10th of June of the year 1698, and, fifteen days after, they came to Monfalout, a considerable town upon the banks of the Nile, the rendezvous of the caravan being at Ibnah, half a league above Monfalout. Here they tarried for above three months, waiting the coming of the merchants from the neighbouring towns.

IN the afternoon of the 24th of September, they advanced above a league and a half distance, and took up their lodging at Elcantara, or the bridge, on the eastern bank of the Nile. A large calish, or cut, from the Nile stretches here to the east, and; at that season, was full of water, the inundation being at its height.

PONCET believes he was on the eastern banks of the Nile; but this is a mistake. Siout and Monfalout, the cities he speaks of, are both on the western banks of that river; nor had the caravan any thing to do with the eastern banks, when their course was for many days to the west, and to the southward of west. Nor was the bridge he passed a bridge over the Nile. There are no bridges upon that river from the Mediterranean till we arrive at the second cataract near the lake Tzana in Abyssinia. The amphitheatre and ruins he speaks of are the remains of the ancient city Isiu; and what he took for the Nile was a calish from the river to supply that city with water.

THE 2d of October the caravan set out in earnest, and passed, as he says, into a frightful desert of sand, having first gone through a narrow passage, which he does not mention.

tion, amidst those barren, bare, and stony mountains which border the valley of Egypt on the west.

THE 6th of October they came to El-Vah, a large village, or town, thick-planted with palm-trees, the Oasis Parva of the ancients, the last inhabited place to the west that is under the jurisdiction of Egypt. By softening the original name, Poncet calls this Helaoue, which, as he says, signifies *sweetness*. But surely this was never given it from the productions he mentions to abound there, *viz.* fenna and coloquintida. The Arabs call El-Vah a shrub or tree, not unlike our hawthorn either in form or flower. It was of this wood, they say, Moses's rod was made when he sweetened the waters of Marah. With a rod of this wood, too, Kaleb Ibn el Waalid, the great destroyer of Christians, sweetened these waters at El-Vah, once very bitter, and gave it the name from this miracle. A number of very fine springs burst from the earth at El-Vah, which renders this small spot verdant and beautiful, though surrounded with dreary deserts on every quarter; it is situated like an island in the midst of the ocean.

THE caravan rested four days at El-Vah to procure water and provisions for the continuation of the journey thro' the desert. Poncet's description of the unpleasantness of this, is perfectly exact, and without exaggeration. In two days they came to Cheb, where there is water, but strongly impregnated with alum, as the name itself signifies; and, three days after, they reached Selima, where they found the water good, rising from an excellent spring, which gives its name to a large desert extending westward forty-five days journey to Dar Fôwr, Dar Selè, and Bagirma, three small principalities

principalities of Negroes that live within the reach of the tropical rains.

At Selima they provided water for five days ; and, on the 26th of October, having turned their course a little to the eastward, came to Moscho, or Machou, a large village on the western banks of the Nile, which Poncet still mistakes for the eastern, and which is the only inhabited place since the leaving El-Vah, and the frontiers of the kingdom of Dongola, dependent upon that of Sennaar. The Nile here takes the farthest turn to the westward, and is rightly delineated in the French maps.

PONCET very rightly says, this is the beginning of the country of the Barabra, or Berberians, (I suppose it is a mistake of the printer when called in the narrative Barauras). The true signification of the term is *the land of the Shepherds*, a name more common and better known in the first dynasties of Egypt than in more modern histories. The Erbab (or governor) of this province received him hospitably, and kindly invited him to Argos, his place of residence, on the eastern or opposite side of the Nile, and entertained him there, upon hearing from Poncet that he was sent for by the king of Abylinia.

AFTER refreshing themselves eight days at Moscho, they left it on the 4th of November 1698, and arrived at Dongola on the 13th of the same month. The country which he passed along the Nile is very pleasant, and is described by him very properly. It does not owe its fertility to the overflowing of the Nile, the banks of that river being considerably too high. It is watered, however, by the industry

dustry of the inhabitants, who, by different machines, raise water from the stream.

We are not to attribute to Poncet, but to those who published, the story here put into father Brevedent's mouth about the fugitive Christians in Nubia, which fable gave rise to the first institution of the Ethiopic mission. "It drew tears," says he, from the eyes of father Brevedent, my dear companion, when he reflected that it was not long since this was a Christian country; and that it had not lost the faith but only for want of some person who had zeal enough to consecrate himself to the instruction of this abandoned nation." He adds, that upon their way they found a great number of hermitages and churches half ruined; a fiction derived from the same source.

DONGOLA was taken, and apostatized early, and the stones of hermitages and churches had long before this been carried off, and applied to the building of mosques. Father Brevedent, therefore, if he wept for any society of Christians at Dongola, must have wept for those that had perished there 500 years before.

PONCET was much carested at Dongola for the cures he made there. The Mek, or king, of that city wished him much to stay and settle there; but desisted out of respect, when he heard he was going to the emperor of Ethiopia. Dongola, Poncet has placed rightly on the eastern bank of the Nile, about lat. 20° 22'.

THE caravan departed from Dongola on the 6th of January 1699; four days after which they entered into the kingdom

of Sennaar, where they met Erbab Ibrahim, brother of the prime minister, and were received civilly by him. He defrayed their expences also as far as Korti, where they arrived the 13th of January.

OUR travellers from Korti were obliged to enter the great desert of Bahiouda, and cross it in a S. E. direction till they came to Derreira, where they rested two days, which, Poncet says, was done to avoid the Arabs upon the Nile. These Arabs are called Chaigie; they inhabit the banks of that river to the N. E. of Korti, and never pay the king his revenue without being compelled and very ill-treated.

THE country about Derreira is called Belled Ullah, from the cause of its plenty rather than the plenty itself. This small district is upon the very edge of the tropical rains, which it enjoys in part; and, by that, is more fruitful than those countries which are watered only by the industry of man. The Arabs of these deserts figuratively call rain Rahamet Ullah, 'the mercy of God', and Belled Ullah, 'the country which enjoys that mercy.'

SOME days after the caravan came to Gerri. Poncet says, the use of this station was to examine caravans coming from the northward, whether they had the small-pox or not. This usage is now discontinued by the decay of trade. It must always have served little purpose, as the infection oftener comes in merchandize than by passengers. At Gerri great respect was shewn to Poncet, as going to Ethiopia.

I CANNOT conceive why Poncet says, that, to avoid the
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great windings of the Nile, he should have been obliged to travel to the north-east. This would have plainly carried him back to the desert of Bahiouda, and the Arabs: his course must have been S. W. to avoid the windings of the Nile, because he came to Herbagi, which he describes very properly as a delicious situation. The next day they came to Sennaar.

THE reader, I hope, will easily perceive that my intention is not to criticise Mr Poncet's journey. That has been done already so illiberally and unjustly that it has nearly brought it into disrepute and oblivion. My intention is to illustrate it; to examine the facts, the places, and distances it contains; to correct the mistakes where it has any, and restore it to the place it ought to hold in geography and discovery. It was the first intelligible itinerary made through these deserts; and I conceive it will be long before we have another; at any rate, to restore and establish the old one will, in all sensible minds, be the next thing to having made a second experiment.

HE surely is in some degree of mistake about the situation of Sennaar when he says it is upon an eminence. It is on a plain close on the western banks of the Nile. A small error, too, has been made about its latitude. By an observation said to have been made by father Brevedent, the 21st of March 1699, he found the latitude of Sennaar to be $13^{\circ} 4'$ north. The French maps, the most correct we have in all that regards the east, place this capital of Nubia in lat. 15° and a few minutes. But the public may rest assured, that the correct latitude of Sennaar, by a mean of very small differences

ences of near fifty observations, made with a three-foot brass quadrant, in the course of several months I staid in that town, is lat $13^{\circ} 34' 36''$ north.

WHAT I have to say further concerning Sennaar will come more naturally in my own travels ; and I shall only so far consider the rest of Poncet's route, as to explain and clear it from mistakes, Sennaar being the only point in which our two tracts unite.

I SHALL beg the reader to remark, that, from the time of Poncet's setting out of Egypt till his arrival at Sennaar, so far was he from being ill-looked upon, or any bad construction being put upon his errand, that he was, on the contrary, respected everywhere, as going to the king of Abyssinia. It never was then imagined he was to dry up the Nile, nor that he was a conjurer to change its course, nor that he was to teach the Abyssinians to cast cannon and make war, nor that he was loaded with immense sums of money. These were all *piæ fraudes*, lies invented by the priests and friars to incite these ignorant barbarians to a crime which, though it passed unrevenged, will justly make these brethren in iniquity the detestation of men of every religion in all ages.

PONCET left Sennaar the 12th of May 1699, and crossed the Nile at Basboch, about four miles above the town, where he stopped for three days. This he calls a fair village ; but it is a very miserable one, consisting of scarce 100 huts, built of mud and reeds.

HE departed the 15th in the evening, and travelled all the night as far as Bacras, and arrived the day after at Abec; then at Baha, a long day's journey of about ten hours. He is mistaken, however, when he says Baha is situated upon the banks of the Nile, for it is upon a small river that runs into it. But, at the season he passed it, most of those rivers were dried up.

ON the 19th he came to Dodar, a place as inconsiderable as Baha; then to Abra, a large village; then to Debarke and Enbulbul. On the 25th they came to Giesim. Giesim is a large village situated upon the banks of the Nile, in the middle of a forest of trees of a prodigious height and size, all of which are loaded with fruit or flowers, and crowded with paroquets, and variety of other birds, of a thousand different colours. They made a long stay at this place, not less than nineteen days.

IN this interval, father Brevedent is said to have made an observation of the latitude of the place, which, if admitted, would throw all the geography of this journey into confusion. Poncet says, that Giesim is half-way between Sennaar and the frontiers of Ethiopia, and that a small brook, a little beyond Serké, is the boundary between those states. Now, from Sennaar to Giesim are nine stages, and one of them we may call a double one, but between Giesim and Serké, only four; Giesim then cannot be half way between Sennaar and Serké.—Again, the latitude of Sennaar is $13^{\circ} 4'$ north, according to Brevedent, or rather $13^{\circ} 34'$. Now, if the latitude of Giesim be 10° , then the distance between Sennaar and it must be about 250 miles which they

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had

had travelled in eight days, or more than thirty miles a-day, which, in that country, is absolutely impossible.

BUT what must make this evident is, that we know certainly that Gondar, the metropolis to which they were then going, is in lat. $12^{\circ} 34'$ north. Giesim then would be south of Gondar, and the caravan must have passed it when the observation was made. But they were not yet arrived at the confines of Sennaar, much less to the capital of Abyssinia, to which they were indeed advancing, but were still far to the northward of it. There is a mistake then in this observation which is very pardonable, Brevedent being then ill of a mortal dysentery, which terminated in death soon after. We shall, therefore, correct this error, making the latitude of Giesim $14^{\circ} 12'$ north, about 110 English miles from Sennaar, and 203 from Gondar.

THE 11th of June they set out from Giesim for Deleb, then to Chow, and next to Abotkna. They rested all night, the 14th, in the delightful valley of Sonnone, and, two days after, they came to Serkè, a large town of trade, where there are many cotton weavers. Here ends the kingdom of Sennaar, the brook without this town being the boundary of the two states.

ARRIVED now in Abyssinia, they halted at Tambisso, a village which belongs to the Abuna; next at Abiad, a village upon the mountain. On the 23d they stopped in a valley full of canes and ebony-trees, where a lion carried away one of their camels. On the 24th they passed the Gandova, a large, violent, and dangerous river. The country being prodigiously woody, one of their beasts of carriage, straggling

straggling from the caravan, was bit on the hip by a bear, as Mr Poncet apprehends. But we are now in the country corresponding to that inhabited by the Shangalla, that is one of the hottest in the world, where the thermometer rises to 100° in the shade. Bears are not found in climates like this ; and most assuredly there are none even in the higher and colder mountains above. Poncet does not say he saw the bear, but judged only by the bite, which might have been that of a lion, leopard, or many other animals, but more probably that of the hyæna.

THE 27th they arrived at Girana, a village on the top of a mountain. Here they left their camels, and began to ascend from the Kolla into the more temperate climate in the mountains of Abyssinia. From Girana they came to Barangoa, and the next day to Tchelga, where anciently was the customhouse of Sennaar while peace and commerce subsisted between the two kingdoms. The 3d of July they arrived at Barcos, or Bartcho, about half a day's journey from Gondar ; and on the 9th of August father Brevedent died. Poncet was himself detained by indisposition at this village of Barcos till the 21st of July, on which day he set out for Gondar and arrived in the evening, where he succeeded to his wishes, performing a complete cure upon his royal patient in a very short time ; and so fulfilled this part of his mission as perfectly as the ablest physician could have done.

As for the other part with which he was charged, I doubt very much if it was in his power to perform it in another manner than he did. It required a mind full of ignorance and presumption, such as was that of Mr de Maillet and all

the missionaries at the head of whom he was, to believe that it was possible for a private man, such as Poncet, without language, without funds, without presents, or without power or possibility of giving them any sort of protection in the way, to prevail upon 26 or 28 persons, on the word of an adventurer only, to attempt the traversing countries where they ran a very great risk of falling into slavery—to do what? why, to go to France, a nation of Franks whose very name they abhorred, that they might be instructed in a religion they equally abhorred, to meet with certain death if ever they returned to their own country; and, unless they did return, they were of no sort of utility whatever.

M. de Maillet should have informed himself well in the beginning, if it was possible that the nobility in Abyssinia could be so contemptible as to suffer twelve of their children to go to countries unknown, upon the word of a stranger, at least of such a doubtful character as Poncet. I say doubtful, because, if he was such a man as M. de Maillet represents him, a drunkard, a liar, a thief, a man without religion, a perpetual talker, and a superficial practitioner of what he called his own trade, surely the Abyssinians must have been very fond of emigration, to have left their homes under the care of such a patron as this. When did M. de Maillet ever hear of an Abyssinian who was willing to leave his own country and travel to Cairo, unless the very few priests who go for duty's sake, for penances or vows, to Jerusalem? When did he ever hear of an Abyssinian layman, noble, or plebeian, attending even the Abuna though the first dignitary of the church? We shall see presently a poor slave, a Christian Abyssinian boy, immediately under the protection of M. de Maillet, and going directly from him into the presence

fence of his king, taken forcibly from the chancellor of the nation *, and made a Mahometan before their eyes.

THE Abyssinian embassy then demanded from France, and recommended to M. de Maillet, was a presumptuous, vain, impracticable chimera, which must have ended in disappointment, and which never could have closed more innocently than it did.

I SHALL pass over all that happened during Poncet's stay at Gondar, as he did not understand the language, and must therefore have been very liable to mistake. But as for what he says of armies of 300,000 men; of the king's dress at his audience; of his mourning in purple; of the quantity of jewels he had, and wore; of his having but one wife; and of large stone-crosses being erected on the corners of the palace at Gondar; these, and several other things, seem to me to have been superadded afterwards. Nor do I think what is said of the churches and Christians remaining in the kingdom of Dongola, nor the monstrous lie about the golden rod suspended in the air in the convent of Bisan †, is at all the narrative of Poncet, but of some fanatic, lying friar, into whose possession Poncet's manuscript might have fallen. The journey itself, such as I have restored it, is certainly genuine; and, as I believe it describes the best and safest way into Abyssinia, I have rectified some of the few errors it had, and now recommend it to all future travellers, and to the public.

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* By Chancellor of the Nation is meant the officer immediately next the consul, who keeps the records, and has a department absolutely independent of the Consul.

† Vid. Poncet.

THIS is to be understood of his travels to Abyffinia, his journey in returning being much more inaccurate and incomplete, the reason of which we have in his own words: "I have not, says he, exactly noted down the places through which we passed, the great weakness I then lay under not permitting me to write as I could have wished." I shall, therefore, say little upon his return, as the deficiency will be carefully supplied by the history of my own journey from Masuah, the road by which he left the country being very nearly the same as that by which I entered.

It was on the 2d of May of the year 1700 that Poncet left Gondar and took his journey to the town of Emfras*. Here there is a mistake in the very beginning. Emfras*, at which place I staid for several weeks, is in lat. $12^{\circ} 12' 38''$, and long. $37^{\circ} 38' 30''$, consequently about 22 miles from Gondar, almost under the same meridian, or south from it; so that, as he was going to the east, and northward of east, this must have been so many miles out of his way; for, going towards Masuah, his first station must have been upon the river Angrab.

THE same may be said of his next to Coga. It was a royal residence indeed, but very much out of his way. He has forgot likewise, when he says, that, in the way from Gondar to Emfras, you must go over a very high mountain. The way from Gondar to Emfras is the beaten way to Begemder, Foggora, and Dara, and so on to the second cataract of the Nile. It is on that plain the armies were encamped

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before

* It is plain Poncet had no instruments for observation with him, nor was he probably acquainted with the use of them.

before the battle of Serbraxos *, whence the road passes by Corréva, which is indeed upon a rising ground, sloping gently to the lake Tzana, but is not either mountain or hill.

SEVEN or eight days are a space of time just enough for the passing through Woggora, where he justly remarks the heats are not so excessive as in the places he came from. He takes no notice of the passage of Lamalmon, which ought to have been very sensible to a man in a decayed state of health, the less so as he was only descending it. Every thing which relates to the passage of the Tacazzé is just and proper, only he calls the river itself the Tekefel, instead of the true name, the *Tacazzé*. It was the Siris of the ancients ; and it is doing justice to both countries, when he compares the province of Siré with the most delicious parts of his own country of France. This province is that also where he might very probably receive the young elephant, which he says awaited him there as a present to the king of France, and which died a few days after.

HE passed afterwards to Adowa. It is the capital of Tigré, is still the seat of its governor, and was that of Ras Michael in my time. All that he says of the intermediate country and its productions, shew plainly that his work is genuine, and his remarks to be those of an eye-witness.

FROM this province of Tigré he enters the country of the Baharnagash, and arrives at Dobarwa, which he erroneously

* To be described hereafter.

ly calls Duvarna, and says it is the capital of the province of Tigrè, whereas it is that of the Baharnagash. Isaac Baharnagash, when in rebellion against his sovereign, surrendered this town to the Turks in the year 1558, as may be seen at large in my history of the transactions of those times.

As the authenticity of this journey, and the reality of Poncet's having been in Abyssinia, has been questioned by a set of vain, ignorant, fanatic people, and that from malice only, not from spirit of investigation, of which they were incapable, I have examined every part of it, and compared it with what I myself saw, and shall now give one other instance to prove it genuine, from an observation Poncet has made, and which has escaped all the missionaries, though it was entire and visible in my time.

AMONG the ruins of Axum * there is a very high obelisk, flat on both sides, and fronting the south. It has upon it no hieroglyphic, but several decorations, or ornaments, the fancy of the architect. Upon a large block of granite, into which the bottom of it is fixed and which stands before it like a table, is the figure of a Greek patera, and on one side of the obelisk, fronting the south, is the representation of a woodend door, lock, and latch to it, which first seems designed to draw back and then lift up, exactly in the manner those kind of locks are fashioned in Egypt at this very day. Poncet observed very justly, there are no such locks made use of

* See an elevation of this in my account of Axum

in Abyssinia, and wonders how they should have represented a thing they had never seen, and, having done so, remained still incapable to make or use it. Poncey was no man of reading out of his own profession; he nowhere pretends it; he recorded this fact because he saw it, as a traveller should do, and left others to give the reason which he could not. Poncey calls this place Heleni, from a small village of that name in the neighbourhood. Had he been a scholar he would have known that the ruins he was observing were those of the city of Axum, the ancient metropolis of this part of Ethiopia.

PTOLEMY EVERGETES, the third Grecian king of Egypt, conquered this city and the neighbouring kingdom; resided some time there; and, being absolutely ignorant of hieroglyphics, then long disused, he left the obelisk he had erected for ascertaining his latitudes ornamented with figures of his own choosing, and the inventions of his subjects the Egyptians, and particularly the door for a convenience of private life, to be imitated by his new-acquired subjects the Ethiopians, to whom it had hitherto been unknown.

FROM Dobarwa he arrived at Arcouva, which, he says, geographers miscall Arequies. M. Poncey might have spared this criticism upon geographers till he himself had been better informed, for both are equally miscalled, whether Arcouva or Arequies. The true and only name of the place, known either to Mahometans or Christians, is Arkeeko, as the island to which he passed, crossing an arm of the sea, is called Masuah, not Messoua, as he everywhere spells it.

FROM Masuah, Poncet crossed the Red Sea to Jidda, passing the island Dahalac and Kotumbal, a high rock, the name of which is not known to many navigators.

HAD old Murat, Musa, and Hagi Ali, happened at that time to have been upon some mercantile errand to Cairo, there is no doubt but they would have been preferred and become ambassadors to France. They would have gone there, perplexed the minister and the consul with a thousand lies and contrivances, which the French never would have been able to unravel; they would have promised every thing; obtained from the king some considerable sum of money, on which they would have undertaken to send the embassy in any form that was prescribed, and, after their return home, never been heard of more. But those worthies were, probably, all employed at this time; therefore the only thing Poncet could do was to bring Murat, since he was to procure at all events an ambassador.

HE had been a cook to a French merchant at Aleppo; was a maker of brandy at Masuah; and probably his uncle old Murat's servant at the time. But he was not the worse ambassador for this. Old Murat, Hagi Ali, and Musa, had perhaps been also cooks and servants in their time. Prudence, sobriety, and good conduct, skill in languages, and acquaintance, with countries recommended them afterwards to higher trusts. Old Murat probably meant that his nephew should begin his apprenticeship with that embassy to France; and M. Poncet, to increase his consequence, and fulfil the commission the consul gave him, allowed him to invent all the rest.

PONCET, from Jidda, went to Tor, and thence to Mount Sinai, where, after some stay, being overtaken by Murat, they both made their entry into Cairo.

M. DE MAILLET, the consul, was an old Norman gentleman, exceedingly fond of nobility, consequently very haughty and overbearing to those he reckoned his inferiors, among which he accounted those of his own nation established at Cairo, though a very amiable and valuable set of men. He was exceedingly testy, choleric, obstinate, and covetous, though sagacious enough in every thing concerning his own interest. He lived for the most part in his closet, seldom went out of his house, and, as far as I could learn, never out of the city. There, however, he wrote a description of all Egypt, which since has had a considerable degree of reputation*.

MAILLET had received advice of the miserable state of this embassy from Jidda, that the Sherriſſe of Mecca had taken from Poncet, by force, two female Abyſſinian ſlaves, and that the elephant was dead; which particulars being written to France, he was adviſed in a letter from father Fleuriau by no means to promote any embassy to the court of Verſailles; that a proper place for it was Rome; but that in France they looked upon it in the ſame light as they did upon an embassy from Algiers or Tunis, which did no honour to thoſe who ſent it, and as little to thoſe that received it; this, however, was a new light.

M. DE

* And there he wrote his *Teliamede* which ſuppoſes men were firſt created fiſhes, for which he was excommunicated. It was an opinion perfectly worthy of alarming the Sorbonne.

M. DE MAILLET, by this letter, becoming master of the ambassador's destiny, began first to quarrel with him upon etiquette, or who should pay the first visit ; and, after a variety of ill-usage, insisted upon seeing his dispatches. This Murat refused to permit, upon which the consul sent privately to the basha, desiring him to take the dispatches or letters from Murat, sending him at the same time a considerable present.

THE basha on this did not fail to extort a letter from Murat by threats of death. He then opened it. It was in Arabic, in very general and indifferent terms, probably the performance of some Moor at Masuah, written at Murat's instance. And well was it for all concerned that it was so ; for had the letter been a genuine Abyssinian letter, like those of the empress Helena and king David III. proposing the destruction of Mecca, Medina, and the Turkish ships on the Red Sea, the whole French nation at Cairo would have been massacred, and the consul and ambassador probably impaled.

THE Jesuits, ignorant of this manœuvre of M. de Maillet, but alarmed and scandalized at this breach of the law of nations, for such the basha's having opened a letter, addressed to the king of France, was justly considered, complained to M. Feriol the French ambassador at Constantinople, who thereupon sent a capigi from the port, to inquire of the basha what he meant by thus violating the law of nations, and affronting a friendly power of such consequence as France.

THESE capigis are very unwelcome guests to people in office to whom they are sent. They are always paid by those they are sent to. Besides this the report they carry back very often costs that person his life. The basha, accused by the capigi at the instance of the French ambassador at Constantinople, answered like an innocent man, That he had done it by desire of the French consul, from a wish to serve him and the nation, otherwise he should never have meddled in the matter. The consequence was, M. de Maillet was obliged to pay the basha the expence of the capigi; and, having some time afterwards brought it in account with the merchants, the French nation at Cairo, by deliberation of the 6th of July of the year 1702, refused to pay 1515 livres, the demand of the basha, and 518 livres for those of his officers.

THE consul, however, had gained a complete victory over Murat, and thereupon determined to send Monhenaut, chancellor of France at Cairo, with letters, which, though written and invented by himself, he pretended to be translations from the Ethiopian original.

BUT father Verseau, the Jesuit, now returned to Cairo, who had entered into a great distrust of the consul since the discovery of his intrigue with the basha about Murat's letter, resolved to be of the party. Poncet, who was likewise on bad terms with the consul, neither inclined to lose the merits of his travels into Abyssinia, nor trust the recital of it to Monhenaut, or to the manner in which it might be represented in the consul's letters. These three, Monhenaut, Poncet, and Verseau, set out therefore for Paris with very different views and designs. They embarked at Bulac, the
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shipping place of Cairo upon the Nile, taking with them the cars of the dead elephant.

THE remaining part of the present brought for the king of France by this illustrious embassy, was an Abyssinian boy, a slave bought by Murat, and who had been hid from the search of the Sheriffe, when he forcibly took from him the two Abyssinian girls, part of the intended present also. This boy no sooner embarked on board the vessel at Bulac than a great tumult arose. The janizaries took the boy out of the vessel by force, and delivered him to Mustapha Cazdagli, their kaya; nor could all the interest of M. de Maillet and the French nation, or all the manœuvres of the Jesuits, ever recover him.

As for Monhenaut, Poncet, and Verseau, his protectors, they were obliged to hide themselves from the violence of the mob, nor dared they again to appear till the vessel sailed. And happy was it for them that this fell out at Cairo, for, had they offered to embark him at Alexandria, in all probability it would have cost all of them their lives.

I MUST beg leave here to suggest to the reader, how dangerous, as well as how absurd, was the plan of this embassy. It was to consist of twenty-eight Abyssinians, twelve of whom were to be sons of noble families, all to be embarked to France. What a pleasant day would the embarkation have been to M. de Maillet! What an honourable appearance for his king, in the eyes of other Christian princes, to have seen twenty-eight Christians under his immediate protection, twelve of whom we might say were princes, (as all the nobility in Abyssinia are directly of the family of the

king), from motives of vanity only, by the pride of the Jesuits, and the ignorance of the consul, hurried in one day into apostacy and slavery! Whatever Maillet thought of Poncet's conduct, his bringing Murat, and him only, took as he was, was the very luckiest accident of his life.

I KNOW French flatterers will say this would not have happened, or, if it had, a vengeance would have followed, worthy the occasion and the resentment of so great a king, and would have prevented all such violations of the law of nations for the future. To this I answer, The mischief would have been irreparable, and the revenge taken, however complete, would not have restored them their religion, and, without their religion, they themselves would not have returned into their own country, but would have remained necessary sacrifices, which the pride and rashness of the Jesuits had made to the faith of Mahomet.

BESIDES, where is the threatened revenge for the assassination of M. du Roule, then actual ambassador from the king of France, of which I am now to speak? Was not the law of nations violated in the strongest manner possible by his murder, and without the smallest provocation? What vengeance was taken for this?—Just the same as would have been for the other injury; for the Jesuits and consul would have concealed the one, as tendernefs for the Franciscan Friars had made them cover the other, lest their abominable wickedness should be exposed. If the court of France did not, their consul in Cairo should have known what the consequence would be of decoying twenty-eight Abyssinians from their own country, to be perverted from their

their own religion, and remain slaves and Mahometans at Cairo, a nuisance to all European nations established there.

UPON the arrival of the triumvirate at Paris, Monhenaut immediately repaired to the minister; Verseau was introduced to the king, and Poncet, soon after, had the same honour. He was then led as a kind of show, through all Paris, cloathed in the Abyssinian dress, and decorated with his gold chain. But while he was vainly amusing himself with this silly pageantry, the consul's letters, and the comments made upon them by Monhenaut, went directly to destroy the credit of his ever having been in Abyssinia, and of the reality of Murat's embassy.

THE Franciscan friars, authors of the murder of M. du Roule, enemies to the mission, as being the work of the Jesuits; M. Piques, member of the Sorbonne, a body never much distinguished for promoting discoveries, or encouraging liberal and free inquiry; Abbé Renaudot, M. le Grande, and some ancient linguists, who, with great difficulty, by the industry of M. Ludolf, had attained to a very superficial knowledge of the Abyssinian tongue, all fell furiously upon Poncet's narrative of his journey. One found fault with the account he gave of the religion of the country, because it was not so conformable to the rites of the church of Rome, as they had from their own imagination and prejudice, and for their own ends conceived it to be. Others attacked the truth of the travels, from improbabilities found, or supposed to be found, in the description of the countries through which he had passed; while others discovered the forgery of his letters, by faults found in the orthography of

that language, not one book of which, at that day, they had ever seen.

ALL these empty criticisms have been kept alive by the merit of the book, by this alone they have any further chance of reaching posterity ; while, by all candid readers, this itinerary, short and incomplete as it is, will not fail to be received as a valuable acquisition to the geography of these unknown countries of which it treats.

I THINK it but a piece of duty to the memory of a fellow-traveller, to the lovers of truth and the public in general, to state the principal objections upon which this outcry against Poncet was raised; that, by the answers they admit of, the world may judge whether they are or are not founded in candour, and that before they are utterly swallowed up in oblivion.

THE first is, that of the learned Renaudot, who says he does not conceive how an Ethiopian could be called by the name of Murat. To this I answer, Poncet, de Maillet, and the Turkish Basha, say Murat was an Armenian, a hundred times over ; but M. Renaudot, upon his own authority, makes him an Ethiopian, and then lays the blame upon others, who are not so ignorant as himself.

SECONDLY, Poncet asserts Gondar was the capital of Ethiopia ; whereas the Jesuits have made no mention of it, and this is supposed a strong proof of Poncet's forgery. I answer, The Jesuits were banished in the end of Socinios's reign, and the beginning of that of his son Facilidas, that is about the year 1632 ; they were finally extirpated in the end of this last prince's reign, that is before the year 1666, by his

his ordering the last Jesuit Bernard Nogueyra, to be publicly hanged. Now Gondar was not built till the end of the reign of Hannes I. who was grandson to Socinios, that is about the year 1680. Unless, then, these holy Jesuits, who, if we believe the missionaries, had all of them a sight into futurity before their martyrdom, had, from these their *last visions*, described Gondar as capital of Abyssinia, it does not occur to me how they should be historians of a fact that had not existence till 50 years after they were dead.

THIRDLY, Poncet speaks of towns and villages in Ethiopia; whereas it is known there are no towns, villages, or cities, but Axum.—I believe that if the Abyssinians, who built the large and magnificent city of Axum, never had other cities, towns, and villages, they were in this the most singular people upon earth; or, if places where 6000 inhabitants live together in contiguous houses, separated with broad streets where there are churches and markets, be not towns and villages, I do not know the meaning of the term; but if these are towns, Poncet hath said truth; and many more such towns, which he never did see nor describe, are in Abyssinia at this day.

FOURTHLY, The Abyssinians live, and always have lived, in tents, not in houses.—It would have been a very extraordinary idea in people living in tents to have built such a city as Axum, whose ruins are as large as those of Alexandria; and it would be still more extraordinary, that people, in such a climate as Abyssinia, in the whole of which there is scorching weather for six months, deluges of rain, storms of wind, thunder, lightning, and hurricanes, such as are unknown in Europe, for the other six, should choose to live in tents, after
knowing

knowing how to build such cities as Axum. I wonder a man's understanding does not revolt against such absurdities in the moment he is stating them.

THE Abyssinians, while at war, use tents and encampments, to secure the liberty of movements and changing of ground, and defend themselves, when stationary, from the inclemency of the weather. But no tent has, I believe, yet been invented that could stand in the fields in that country from June to September; and they have not yet formed an idea of Abyssinia who can suppose this.

I CONCEIVE it is *ignorance* of the language which has led these *learned* men into this mistake. The Abyssinians call a house, standing by itself, allotted to any particular purpose, *Bet*. So *Bet Negus* is a palace, or the house of a king; *Bet Christian* is a church, or a house for Christian worship; whilst *Bet Mocha* is a prison, or house under ground. But houses in towns or villages are called *Taintes*, from the Abyssinian word *Tain*, to sleep, lie down, rest, or repose. I suppose the similitude of this word to tents has drawn these *learned* critics to believe, that, instead of towns, these were only collections of tents. But still I think, no one acquainted with the Abyssinian language, or without being so, would be so void of understanding as to believe, a people that had built Axum of stone, should endure, for ages after, a tropical winter in bare tents.

THE fifth thing that fixes falsehood upon Poncet is, that he describes delicious valleys beyond European ideas; beautiful plains, covered with odoriferous trees and shrubs, to be everywhere in his way on the entrance of Abyssinia; whereas,

whereas, when Salidan's brother conquered this country, the Arabian books say they found it destitute of all this fruitfulness. But, with all submission to the Arabian books, to Abbé Renaudot and his immense reading, I will maintain, that neither Salidan, nor his brother, nor any of his tribe, ever conquered the country Poncet describes, nor were in it, or ever saw it at a distance.

THE province where Poncet found these beautiful scenes lies between lat. 12 and 13°. The soil is rich, black mould, which six months tropical rain are needed to water sufficiently, where the sun is vertical to it twice a-year, and stationary, with respect to it, for several days, at the distance of 10°, and at a lesser distance still for several months; where the sun, though so near, is never seen, but a thick screen of watery clouds is constantly interposed, and yet the heat is such, that Fahrenheit's thermometer rises to 100° in the shade. Can any one be so ignorant in natural history, as to doubt that, under these circumstances, a luxuriant, florid, odoriferous vegetation must be the consequence? Is not this the case in every continent or island within these limits all round the globe?

BUT Poncet contradicts the Arabian books, and all travellers, modern and ancient; for they unanimously agree that this country is a dreary miserable desert, producing nothing but Dora, which is millet, and such like things of little or no value. I wish sincerely that M. Renaudot, when he was attacking a man's reputation, had been so good as to name the author whose authority he relied on. I shall take upon me to deny there ever was an Arabian book which treated of this country. And with regard to the ancient

cient and modern travellers, his quotations from them are, if possible, still more visionary and ridiculous. The only ancient travellers, who, as I believe, ever visited that country, were Cambyfes's ambaffadors; who, probably, passed this part of Poncet's track when they went to the Macrobii, and the most modern authors (if they can be called modern) that came nearest to it, were the men sent by Nero * to discover the country, whose journey is very doubtful; and they, when they approached the parts described by Poncet, say "the country began to be green and beautiful." Now I wish M. Renaudot had named any traveller more modern than these messengers of Nero, or more ancient than those ambaffadors of Cambyfes, who have travelled through and described the country of the Shangalla.

I, THAT have lived months in that province, and am the only traveller that ever did so, must corroborate every word Poncet has said upon this occasion. To dwell on landscapes and picturesque views, is a matter more proper for a poet than a historian. Those countries which are described by Poncet, merit a pen much more able to do them justice, than either his or mine.

It will be remembered when I say this, it is of the country of the Shangalla, between lat. 12° and 13° north, that this is the people who inhabit a hot woody stripe called Kolla, about 40 or 50 miles broad, that is from north to south, bounded by the mountainous country of Abyssinia, till they join the Nile at Fazuclo, on the West.

I HAVE

I HAVE also said, that, for the sake of commerce, these Shangalla have been extirpated in two places, which are like two gaps, or chafms, in which are built towns and villages, and through which caravans pass between Sennaar and Abyssinia. All the rest of this country is impervious and inaccessible, unless by an armed force. Many armies have perished here. It is a tract totally unknown, unless from the small detail that I have entered into concerning it in my travels.

AND here I must set the critic right also, as to what he says of the produce of these parts. There is no grain called Dara, at least that I know of. If he meant millet, he should have called it Dora. It is not a mark of barrenness in the ground where this grows: part of the finest land in Egypt is sown with it. The banks of the Nile which produce Dora would also produce wheat; but the inhabitants of the desert like this better; it goes farther, and does not subject them to the violent labour of the plough, to which all inhabitants of extreme hot countries are averse.

THE same I say of what he remarks with regard to cotton. The finest valleys in Syria, watered by the cool refreshing springs that fall from Mount Libanus, are planted with this shrub; and, in the same grounds alternately, the tree which produces its sister in manufactures, silk, whose value is greatly enhanced by the addition. Cotton clothes all Ethiopia; cotton is the basis of its commerce with India, and of the commerce between England, France, and the Levant; and, were it not for some such ignorant, superficial reasoners as Abbè Renaudot, cotton, after wool, should be the favourite manufacture of Britain. It will in time take

place of that ungrateful culture, flax; will employ more hands, and be a more ample field for distinguishing the ingenuity of our manufacturers.

WE see, then, how the least consideration possible destroys these ill-founded objections, upon which these very ignorant enemies of Poncez attempted to destroy his credit, and rob him of the merit of his journey. At last they ventured to throw off the mask entirely, by producing a letter supposed to be written from Nubia by an Italian friar, who asserts roundly, that he hears Poncez was never at the capital of Ethiopia, nor ever had audience of Yafous; but stole the clothes and money of father Brevedent, then married, and soon after forsook his wife and Ethiopia together.

MAILLET could have easily contradicted this, had he acted honestly; for Hagi Ali had brought him the king of Abyssinia's letter, who thanked him for his having sent Poncez, and signified to him his recovery. But without appealing to M. Maillet upon the subject, I conceive nobody will doubt, that Hagi Ali had a commission to bring a physician from Cairo to cure his master, and that Poncez was proposed as that physician, with consent of the consul. Now, after having carried Poncez the length of Bartcho, where it is agreed he was when Brevedent died, (for he was supposed there to have robbed that father of his money) what could be Hagi Ali's reason for not permitting him to proceed half a day's journey farther to the capital, and presenting him to the king, who had been at the pains and expence of sending for him from Egypt? What excuse could Hagi Ali make for not producing him, when he must have delivered the
consul's

consul's letters, telling him that Poncet was come with the caravan for the purpose of curing him?

BESIDES this, M. de Maillet saw Hagi Ali afterwards at Cairo, where he reproached him with his cruel behaviour, both to Poncet and to friar Justin, another monk that had come along with him from Ethiopia. Maillet then must have been fully instructed of Poncet's whole life and conversation in Ethiopia, and needed not the Italian's supposed communication to know whether or not he had been in Ethiopia. Besides, Maillet makes use of him as the forerunner of the other embassy he was then preparing to Gondar, and to that same king Yafous, which would have been a very strange step had he doubted of his having been there before.

SUPPOSING all this not enough, still we know he returned by Jidda, and the consul corresponded with him there. Now, how did he get from Bartcho to the Red Sea without passing the capital, and without the king's orders or knowledge? Who franked him at those number of dangerous barriers at Woggora, Lamalmon, the Tacazzé, Kella, and Adowa, where, though I had the authority of the king, I could not sometimes pass without calling force to my assistance? Who freed him from the avarice of the Baharna-gash, and the much more formidable rapacity of that murderer the Naybe, who, we have seen in the history of this reign, attempted to plunder the king's own factor Musa, though his master was within three days journey at the head of an army that in a few hours could have effaced every vestige of where Masuah had stood? All this, then, is a ridiculous fabrication of lies; the work, as I have before

said, of those who were concerned in the affair of the unhappy Du Roule.

PONCET, having lost all credit, retired from Paris in disgrace, without any further gratification than that which he at first received. He carried to Cairo with him, however, a gold watch and a mirror, which he was to deliver to the consul as a present to his companion Murat, whose subsistence was immediately stopped, and liberty given him to return to Ethiopia.

NOR did Maillet's folly stop here. After giving poor Murat all the ill-usage a man could possibly suffer, he entrusted him with a Jesuit * whom he was to introduce into Ethiopia, where he would certainly have lost his life had not the bad-treatment he received by the way made him return before he arrived at Masuah.

THIS first miscarriage seemed only to have confirmed the Jesuits more in their resolution of producing an embassy. But it now took another form. Politicians and statesmen became the actors in it, without a thought having been bestowed to diminish the enemies of the scheme, or render their endeavours useless, by a superior knowledge of the manners and customs of the country through which this embassy was to pass.

No adventurer, or vagrant physician, (like Poncet) was to be employed in this second embassy. A minister versed
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* Father Bernat, a Frenchman.

in languages, negotiations, and treaties, accompanied with proper dragomans and officers, was to be sent to Abyssinia to cement a perpetual friendship and commerce between two nations that had not a national article to exchange with each other, nor way to communicate by sea or land. The minister, who must have known this, very wisely, at giving his fiat, pitched upon the consul M. de Maillet to be the ambassador, as a man who was acquainted with the causes of Poncet's failure, and, by following an opposite course, could bring this embassy to a happy conclusion for both nations.

MAILLET considered himself as a general whose business was to direct and not to execute. A tedious and troublesome journey through dangerous deserts was out of the sphere of his closet, beyond the limits of which he did not choose to go. Beyond the limits of this, all was desert to him. He excused himself from the embassy, but gave in a memorial to serve as a rule for the conduct of his successor in the nomination in a country he had never seen ; but this, being afterwards adopted as a well-considered regulation, proved one of the principal causes of the miscarriage and tragedy that followed.

M. NOIR DU ROULE, vice-consul at Damietta, was pitched upon as the ambassador to go to Abyssinia. He was a young man of some merit, had a considerable degree of ambition, and a moderate skill in the common languages spoken in the east, but was absolutely ignorant of that of the country to which he was going, and, what was worse, of the customs and prejudices of the nations through which he was to pass. Like most of his countrymen, he had a violent predilection

for the dress, carriage, and manners of France, and a hearty contempt for those of all other nations; this he had not addressed enough to disguise, and this endangered his life. The whole French nation at Cairo were very ill-disposed towards him, in consequence of some personal slight, or imprudences, he had been guilty of; as also towards any repetition of projects which brought them, their commerce, and even their lives into danger, as the last had done.

THE merchants, therefore, were averse to this embassy; but the Jesuits and Maillet were the avowed supporters of it, and they had with them the authority of the king. But each aimed to be principal, and had very little confidence or communication with his associate.

As for the capuchins and Franciscans, they were mortally offended with M. de Maillet for having, by the introduction of the Jesuits, and the power of the king of France, forcibly wrested the Ethiopic mission from them which the pope had granted, and which the sacred congregation of cardinals had confirmed. These, by their continual communication with the Cophts, the Christians of Egypt, had so far brought them to adopt their designs as, one and all, to regard the miscarriage of du Roule and his embassy, as what they were bound to procure from honour and mutual interest.

THINGS being in these circumstances, M. du Roule arrived at Cairo, and took upon him the charge of this embassy, and from that moment the intrigues began.

THE consul had persuaded du Roule, that the proper presents he should take with him to Sennaar were prints of the king and queen of France, with crowns upon their heads; mirrors, magnifying and multiplying objects, and deforming them; when brocade, fatten, and trinkets of gold or silver, iron or steel, would have been infinitely more acceptable.

ELIAS, an Armenian, a confidential servant of the French nation, was first sent by-way of the Red Sea into Abyssinia, by Masuah, to proceed to Gondar, and prepare Yabous for the reception of that ambassador, to whom he, Elias, was to be the interpreter. So far it was well concerted; but, in preparing for the end, the middle was neglected. A number of friars were already at Sennaar, and had poisoned the minds of that people, naturally barbarous, brutal, and jealous. Money, in presents, had gained the great; while lies, calculated to terrify and enrage the lower class of people, had been told so openly and avowedly, and gained such root, that the ambassador, when he arrived at Sennaar, found it, in the first place, necessary to make a *procès verbal*, or what we call a precognition, in which the names of the authors, and substance of these reports, were mentioned, and of this he gave advice to M. de Maillet, but the names and these papers perished with him.

IT was on the 9th of July 1704 that M. du Roule set out from Cairo, attended by a number of people who, with tears in their eyes, foresaw the pit into which he was falling. He embarked on the Nile; and, in his passage to Siout, he found at every halting-place some new and dangerous

gerous lie propagated, which could have no other end but his destruction.

BELAC, a Moor, and factor for the king of Sennaar, was chief of the caravan which he then joined. Du Roule had employed, while at Cairo, all the usual means to gain this man to his interest, and had every reason to suppose he had succeeded. But, on his meeting him at Siout, he had the mortification to find that he was so far changed that it cost him 250 dollars to prevent his declaring himself an abettor of his enemies. And this, perhaps, would not have sufficed, had it not been for the arrival of Fornetti, drugoman to the French nation at Cairo, at Siout, and with him a capigi and chiaoux from Ismael Bey, the port of janizaries, and from the basha of Cairo, expressly commanding the governor of Siout, and Belac chief of the caravan, to look to the safety of du Roule, and protect him at the hazard of their lives, and as they should answer to them.

ALL the parties concerned were then called together; and the fedtah, or prayer of peace, used in long and dangerous journies, was solemnly recited and assented to by them all; in consequence of which, every individual became bound to stand by his companion even to death, and not separate himself from him, nor see him wronged, though it was for his own gain or safety. This test brought all the secret to light; for Ali Chelebi, governor of Siout, informed the ambassador, that the Christian merchants and Franciscan friars were in a conspiracy, and had sworn to defeat and disappoint his embassy even by the loss of his life, and that, by presents, they had gained him to be a partner in that conspiracy.

BELAC,

BELAC, moreover, told him, that the patriarch of the Cophts had assured the principal people of which that caravan consisted, that the Franks then travelling with him were not merchants, but forcerers, who were going to Ethiopia, to obstruct, or cut off the course of the Nile, that it might no longer flow into Egypt, and that the general resolution was to drive the Franks from the caravan at some place in the desert which suited their designs, which were to reduce them to perish by hunger or thirst, or else to be otherwise slain, and no more heard of.

THE caravan left Siout the 12th of September. In twelve days they passed the lesser desert, and came to Khargué, where they were detained six days by a young man, governor of that place, who obliged M. du Roule to pay him 120 dollars, before he would suffer him to pass further; and at the same time forced him to sign a certificate, that he had been permitted to pass without paying any thing. This was the first sample of the usage he was to expect in the further prosecution of his journey.

ON the 3d of October they entered the great desert of Selima, and on the 18th of same month they arrived at Machou, or Moscho, on the Nile, where their caravan staid a considerable time, till the merchants had transacted their business. It was at this place the ambassador learned, that several Franciscan friars had passed the caravan while it remained at Siout, and advanced to Sennaar, where they had staid some time, but had lately left that capital upon news of the caravan's approaching, and had retired, nobody knew whether.

A REPORT was soon after spread abroad at Cairo, but no one could ever learn whence it came, that the ambassador, arriving at Dongola, had been assassinated there. This, indeed, proved false, but was, in the mean time, a mournful presage of the melancholy catastrophe that happened soon afterwards.

M. DU ROULE arrived at Sennaar towards the end of May, and wrote at that time; but a packet of letters was after brought to the consul at Cairo, bearing date the 18th of June. The ambassador there mentions, that he had been well received by the king of Sennaar, who was a young man, fond of strangers; that particular attention had been shewn him by Sid Achmet-el-coom; or, as he should have called him, Achmet Sid-el-coom, i. e. Achmet master of the household. This officer, sent by the king to visit the baggage of the ambassador, could not help testifying his surprise to find it so inconsiderable, both in bulk and value.

He said the king had received letters from Cairo, informing him that he had twenty chests of silver along with him. Achmet likewise told him, that he himself had received information, by a letter under the hand and seal of the most respectable people of Cairo, warning him not to let M. du Roule pass; for the intention of his journey into Abyssinia was to prevail on Yafous to attack Masuah and Suakem, and take them from the Turks. Achmet would not suffer the bales intended for the king of Abyssinia to be opened or visited, but left them in the hands of the ambassador.

M. DU ROULE, however, in writing this account to the consul, intimated to him that he thought himself in danger,

ger, and declares that he did not believe there was on earth so barbarous, brutal, and treacherous a people, as were the Nubians.

It happened that the king's troops had gained some advantage over the rebellious Arabs, on which account there was a festival at court, and M. du Roule thought himself obliged to exert himself in every thing which could add to the magnificence of the occasion. With this intention he shaved his beard, and dressed himself like a European, and in this manner he received the visit of the minister Achmet. M. Macé, in a letter to the consul of the above date, complains of this novelty. He says it shocked every body; and that the * mirrors which multiplied and deformed the objects, made the lower sorts of the people look upon the ambassador and his company as forcerers.

UPON great festivals, in most Mahometan kingdoms, the king's wives have a privilege to go out of their apartments, and visit any thing new that is to be seen. These of the king of Sennaar are very ignorant, brutish, fantastic, and easily offended. Had M. du Roule known the manners of the country, he would have treated these black majesties with strong spirits, sweetmeats, or scented waters; and he might then have shewed them with impunity any thing that he pleased.

BUT being terrified with the glasses, and disgusted by his inattention, they joined in the common cry, that the ambassador was a magician, and contributed all in their power to

ruin him with the king; which, after all, they did not accomplish, without the utmost repugnance and difficulty. The farthest length at first they could get this prince to go was, to demand 3000 dollars of the ambassador. This was expressly refused, and private disgust followed.

M. DU ROULE being now alarmed for his own safety, insisted upon liberty to set out forthwith for Abyssinia. Leave was accordingly granted him, and after his baggage was loaded, and every thing prepared, he was countermanded by the king, and ordered to return to his own house. A few days after this he again procured leave to depart; which a short time after was again countermanded. At last, on the 10th of November, a messenger from the king brought him final leave to depart, which, having every thing ready for that purpose, he immediately did.

THE ambassador walked on foot, with two country Christians on one hand, and Gentil his French servant on the other. He refused to mount on horseback, but gave his horse to a Nubian servant to lead. M. Lipi, and M. Macé, the two drugomans, were both on horseback. The whole company being now arrived in the middle of the large square before the king's house, the common place of execution for criminals, four blacks attacked the ambassador, and murdered him with four strokes of sabres. Gentil fell next by the same hands, at his master's side. After him M. Lipi and the two Christians; the two latter protesting that they did not belong to the ambassador's family.

M. DU ROULE died with the greatest magnanimity, fortitude, and resignation. Knowing his person was sacred by

the law of nations, he disdained to defend it by any other means, remitting his revenge to the guardians of that law, and he exhorted all his attendants to do the same. But M. Macè the Drugeman, young and brave, and a good horseman, was not of the sheep kind, to go quietly to the slaughter. With his pistols he shot two of the assassins that attacked him, one after the other, dead upon the spot; and was continuing to defend himself with his sword, when a horseman, coming behind him, thrust him through the back with a lance, and threw him dead upon the ground.

Thus ended the second attempt of converting Abyssinia by an embassy. A scheme, if we believe M. de Maillet, which had cost government a considerable expence, for in a memorial, of the 1st of October 1706, concerning the death of M. du Roule, he makes the money and effects which he had along with him, when murdered, to amount to 200 purses, or L.25,000 Sterling. This, however, is not probable; because, in another place he speaks of M. du Roule's having demanded of him a small supply of money while at Sennaar, which friar Joseph, a capuchin, refused to carry for him. Such a supply would not have been necessary if the ambassador had with him such a sum as that already mentioned; therefore I imagine it was exaggerated, with a view to make the Turkish basha of Suakem quarrel with the king of Sennaar about the recovering it.

THE friars, who were in numbers at Sennaar, left it immediately before the coming of M. du Roule. This they might have done without any bad intention towards him; they returned, however, immediately after his murder. This, I think, very clearly constitutes them the authors of

it. For had they not been privy and promoters of the assassination, they would have fled with fear and abhorrence from a place where six of their brethren had been lately so treacherously slain, and were not yet buried, but their carcases abandoned to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, and where they themselves, therefore, could have no assurance of safety.

THEY however pretended, first to lay the blame upon the king of Abyssinia, then upon the king of Sennaar, and then they divided it between them both. But Elias, arrived at Gondar, vindicated that prince, as we shall presently see, and the list of names taken at Sennaar; and a long series of correspondence, which afterwards came out, and a chain of evidence which was made public, incontestibly prove that the king of Sennaar was but an agent, and indeed an unwilling one, who two several times repented of his bloody design, and made M. du Roule return to his own house, to evade the execution of it.

THE blood then of this gallant and unfortunate gentleman undoubtedly lies upon the heads of the reformed Franciscan friars, and their brethren, the friars of the Holy Land. The interest of these two bodies, and a bigotted prince, such as Louis XIV then was, was more than sufficient to stop all inquiry, and hinder any vengeance to be taken on those holy assassins. But he who, unperceived, follows deliberate murder through all its concealments and darkness of its ways, in a few years required satisfaction for the blood of du Roule, at a time and place unforeseen, and unexpected.

WE shall now return to Gondar to king Yafous, who being recovered of his disease, and having dismissed his physician, was preparing to set out on a campaign against the Galla.

YASOUS, for his first wife, had married Ozoro Malacorawit, a lady of great family and connections in the province of Gojam. By her he had a son, Tecla Haimanout, who was grown to manhood, and had hitherto lived in the most dutiful affection and submission to his father, who, on his part, seemed to place unlimited confidence in his son. He now gave a proof of this, not very common in the annals of Abyssinia, by leaving Tecla Haimanout behind him, at an age when he was fit to reign, appointing him Betwudet, with absolute power to govern in his absence. Yafous had a mistress whom he tenderly loved, a woman of great quality likewise, whose name was Ozoro Kedustè. She was sister to his Fit-Auraris, Agné, a very distinguished and capable officer, and by her he had three children, David, Hannes, and Jonathan.

It happened, while he was watching the motions of the Galla, news were brought that Ozoro Kedustè had been taken ill of a fever; and though, upon this intelligence, he disposed his affairs so as to return with all possible expedition, yet when he came to Bercanté, the lady's house, he found that she was not only dead, but had been for some time buried. All his presence of mind now left him; he fell into the most violent transport of wild despair, and, ordering her tomb to be opened, he went down into it, taking his three sons along with him, and became so frantic at the sight of the corpse, that it was with the utmost difficulty

culty he could be forced again to leave the *sépulchre*. He returned first to Gondar, then he retired to an island in the lake Tzana, there to mourn his lost mistress.

BUT before this, Elias, ignorant of what had passed at Sennaar, presented M. de Maillet's letter to him, beseeching his leave for M. du Roule to enter Abyssinia, and come into his presence. This he easily procured : Yafous was fond of strangers ; and not only granted the request, but sent a man of his own to Sennaar with letters to the king to protect and defray the expences of the ambassador to Gondar. This man, who had affairs of his own, loitered away a great deal of time in the journey, so that Elias, upon first hearing of the arrival of the ambassador, set out himself to meet him at Sennaar. The king, in the mean time, having finished his mourning, dispatched Badjerund Oustas to his son the Betwudet, at Gondar, ordering him forthwith to send him a body of his household troops to rendezvous on the banks of the lake, opposite to the island Tchekla Wunze, where he then had his residence.

It has been said, contrary to all truth, by those who have wrote travels into this country, that sons born in marriage had the same preference in succession as they have in other countries. But this, as I have said, is entirely without foundation : For, in the first place, there is no such thing as a regular marriage in Abyssinia ; all consists in mere consent of parties. But, allowing this to be regular, not only natural children, that is, those born in concubinage where no marriage was in contemplation ; and adulterous bastards, that is, the sons of unmarried women by married men ; and all manner of sons whatever, succeed equally as well to the crown

crown as to private inheritance; and there cannot be a more clear example of this than in the present king, who, although he had a son, Tecla Haimanout, born of the queen Malacotawit in wedlock, was yet succeeded by three bastard brothers, all sons of Yafous, born in adultery, that is, in the life of the queen. David and Hannes were sons of the king by his favourite Ozoro Kedusté; Bacuffa, by another lady of quality.

ALTHOUGH the queen, Malacotawit, had passed over with seeming indifference the preference the king had given his mistress, Ozoro Kedusté, during her lifetime, yet, from a very unaccountable kind of jealousy, she could not forgive those violent tokens of affection the king had shewn after her death, by going down with his sons and remaining with the body in the grave. Full of resentment for this, she had persuaded her son, Tecla Haimanout, that Yafous had determined to deprive him of his succession, to send him and her, his mother, both to Wechnè, and place his bastard brother, David, son of Ozoro Kedusté, upon the throne.

THE queen had been very diligent in attaching to her the principal people about the court. By her own friends, and the assistance of the discontented and banished monks, she had raised a great army in Gojam under her brothers, Dermin and Paulus. Tecla Haimanout had shewn great signs of wisdom and talents for governing, and very much attached to himself some of his father's oldest and ablest servants.

It was, therefore, agreed, in return to Yafous's message by Oufas, to answer, That, after so long a reign, and so much bloodshed, the king would do well to retire to some convent for the rest of his life, and atone for the many great sins he had committed; and that he should leave the kingdom in the hands of his son Tecla Haimanout, as the ancient king Caleb had resigned his crown into the hands of St Pantaleon in favour of his son Guebra Mascal. As it was not very safe to deliver such a message to a king such as Yafous, it was therefore sent to him by a common foot-soldier, who could not be an object of resentment.

THE king received it at Tchekla Wunze, the island in the lake Tzana, where he was then residing. He answered with great sharpness, by the same messenger, " That he had been long informed who these were that had seduced his son, Tecla Haimanout, at once from his duty to him as his father, and his allegiance as his sovereign; that though he did not hold them to be equal in sanctity to St Pantaleon, yet, such as they were, he proposed immediately to meet them at Gondar, and settle there his son's coronation."

THIS ironical message was perfectly understood: Those of the court that were with Tecla Haimanout, and the inhabitants of the capital, met together, and bound themselves by a solemn oath to live and die with their king Tecla Haimanout. The severity of Yafous was well known; his provocation now was a just one; and the measure of vengeance that awaited them, every one concerned knew to be such that there was no alternative but death or victory.

NEITHER party were slack in preparations. Kasmati Honorius, governor of Damot, a veteran officer and old servant of Yafous, collected a large body of troops and marched them down the west side of the lake. Yafous having there joined them, and putting himself at the head of his army, began his march, rounding the lake on its south side towards Dingleber.

NEITHER did Tecla Haimanout delay a moment after hearing his father was in motion, but marched with his army from Gondar, attended with all the ensigns of royalty. He encamped at Bartcho, in that very field where Za Denghel was defeated and slain by his rebellious subjects. Thinking this a post ominous to kings, he resolved to wait for his father there, and give him battle.

THE king, in his march through the low country of Dembea, was attacked by a putrid fever, very common in those parts, which so increased upon him that he was obliged to be carried back to Tchekla Wunze. This accident discouraged his whole party. His army, with Honorius, took the road to Gojam, but did not disperse, awaiting the recovery of the king.

BUT the queen, Malacotawit, no sooner heard that Yafous her husband was sick at Tchekla Wunze, than she sent to her son Tecla Haimanout to leave his unwholesome station, and march back immediately to Gondar; and, as soon as he was returned, she dispatched her two brothers, Dermin and Paulus, with a body of soldiers and two Mahometan musqueteers, who, entering the island Tchekla Wunze by surprise, shot and disabled the king while sitting on a couch;

immediately after which, Dermin thrust him through with a sword. They attempted afterwards to burn the body, in order to avoid the ill-will the sight of it must occasion: In this, however, they were prevented by the priests of the island and the neighbouring nobility, who took possession of the body, washed it, and performed all the rites of sepulture, then carried it in a kind of triumph, with every mark of magnificence due to the burial of a king, interring it in the small island of Mitraha, where lay the body of all his ancestors, and where I have seen the body of this king still entire.

NOR did the prince his son, Tecla Haimanout, now king, discourage the people in the respect they voluntarily paid to his father. On the contrary, that parricide himself shewed every outward mark of duty, to the which inwardly his heart had been long a stranger.

PONCET, who saw this king, gives this character of him: He says he was a man very fond of war, but averse to the shedding of blood. However this may appear a contradiction, or said for the sake of the antithesis, it really was the true character of this prince, who, fond of war, and in the perpetual career of victory, did, by pushing his conquests as far as they could go, inevitably occasion the spilling of much blood. Yet, when his army was not in the field, though he detected a multitude of conspiracies among priests and other people at home, whose lives in consequence were forfeited to the law, he very rarely, either from his own motives, or the persuasion of others, could be induced to inflict capital punishments though often strongly provoked to it.

UPON his death the people unanimously gave to him the name of Tallac, which signifies *the Great*, a name he has ever since enjoyed unimpeached in the Abyssinian annals, or history of his country, from the which this his reign is taken.



TECLA HAIMANOUT I.

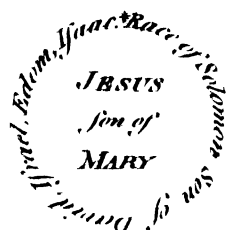
From 1704 to 1706.

Writes in Favour of Du Roule—Defeats the Rebels—Is assassinated while hunting.

ELIAS the Armenian, of whom we have already spoken, and who was charged with letters of protection from Yafous to meet M. du Roule at Sennaar, had reached within three days journey of that capital when he heard that king Yafous was assassinated. Terrified at the news, he returned in the utmost haste to Gondar, and presented the letters, which had been written by Yafous, to be renewed by his son, king Tecla Haimanout. Tecla Haimanout read his father's letters, and approved of their contents, ordering them to be copied in his own name; and Elias without delay set out with them. I have inserted a translation of these letters, which were originally written in Arabic, and seem to

me to be of the few that are authentic among those many which have been published as coming from Abyffinia.

“ The king Tecla Haimanout, fon of the king of the church of Ethiopia, king of a thousand churches.



“ ON the part of the powerful august king, arbiter of nations, shadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings who profess the religion of the Messiah, the most powerful of Christian kings, he that maintains order between Mahometans and Christians, protector of the boundaries of Alexandria, observer of the commandments of the gospel, descended of the line of the prophets David and Solomon,—may the blessing of Israel be upon our prophet and upon them.—To the king Baady, son of the king Ounsa, may his reign be full of happiness, being a prince endowed with these rare qualities that deserve the highest praises as governing his kingdom with distinguished wisdom, and by an order full of equity.—The king of France, “ who

* This is not the king's seal. It is the invention of some Mahometan employed to write the letters.

“ who is a Christian, wrote a letter seven or eight years ago,
 “ by which he signified to me, that he wished to open a
 “ trade for the advantage of his subjects and of mine, which
 “ request we have granted. We come at present to under-
 “ stand, that he has sent us presents by a man whose name
 “ is du Roule, who has likewise several others along with
 “ him, and that these people have been arrested at your
 “ town of Sennaar. We require of you, therefore, to set
 “ them immediately at liberty, and to suffer them to come
 “ to us with all the marks of honour, and that you should
 “ pay regard to the ancient friendship which has always
 “ subsisted between our predecessors, since the time of the
 “ *king of Sedgid* and the *king of Kim*, to the present day. We
 “ also demand of you to suffer all the subjects of the king of
 “ France to pass, and all those that come with letters of his
 “ consul who is at Cairo, as all such Frenchmen come for
 “ trade only, being of the same religion with us. We likewise
 “ recommend to you, that you permit to pass freely, all
 “ French Christians, Cophts, and Syrians who follow our
 “ rites, observing our religion, and who intend coming into
 “ our country; and that you do not suffer any of those
 “ who are contrary to our religion to pass, such as the monk
 “ Joseph, and his companions, whom you may keep at Sen-
 “ naar, it being in no shape our intention to suffer them to
 “ come into our dominions, where they would occasion
 “ troubles, as being enemies to our faith. God grant you
 “ your desires.”—Wrote the 10th of Zulkadè, Anno 1118, *i. e.*
 the 21st of January 1706.

☞ The direction is—“ To king Baady, son of king
 “ Ounfa, may God favour him with his grace.”

THE first thing I remark upon this letter is, the mention of the ancient peace and friendship which subsisted between the predecessors of these two princes now corresponding. It was a friendship, he says, that had endured from the time of the king of *Sedgid*, and the king of *Kim*, to the present day.

THE kingdom of Sennaar, as we shall see, was but a modern one, and recently established by conquest over the Arabs. Therefore the kingdoms of *Sedgid* and of *Kim* were, before that conquest, places whence this black nation came that had established their sovereignty at Sennaar by conquest: from which, therefore, I again infer, there never was any war, conquest, or tribute between Abyssinia and that state.

THE Arabs, who fed their flocks near the frontiers of the two countries, were often plundered by the kings of Abyssinia making descents into Atbara; but this was never reckoned a violation of peace between the two sovereigns. On the contrary, as the motive of the Arabs, for coming south into the frontiers of Abyssinia, was to keep themselves independent, and out of the reach of Sennaar, when the king of Abyssinia fell upon them there, he was understood to do that monarch service, by driving them down farther within his reach. The Baharnagash has been always at war with them; they are tributary to him for eating his grass and drinking his water, and nothing that he ever does to them gives any trouble or inquietude to Sennaar. It is interpreted as maintaining his ancient dominion over the Shepherds, those of Sennaar being a new power, and accounted as usurpers.

M. DE MAILLET, nor M. le Grande his historian, have not thought fit to explain who the monk Joseph was mentioned in this letter. Now it is certain, that, when Murat and Poncet were returned from Abyssinia, there was a missionary of the minor friars, who arrived in Ethiopia, had an audience of the king, and wrote a letter in his name to the pope, wherein he has foisted many improbabilities and falsehoods; and concludes with declaring on the part of Yafous, that he submits to the see of Rome in the same manner the kings his predecessors had submitted. He makes Yafous speak Latin, too; and it is perfectly plain from the * whole letter, that, though he writes it himself, he cannot conceal that the king Yafous wanted him very much away, and was very uneasy at his stay at Gondar. Who this was we know not, but suppose it was one of those assassins of M. du Roule, carrying on a private intrigue without participation of the consul, some of whom were afterwards detected in Walkayt in the reign of David IV.

As for Elias, the forerunner of the French embassy, now become the only remains of it, he continued in Abyssinia (to judge by his letter) in great poverty, till the year 1718, immediately after which he went over to Arabia Felix, and first wrote from Mocha to M. de Maillet consul at Cairo; as it will appear in the reign of David IV. where I have inserted his letter; that written to M. du Roule in the name of Yafous, that of Tecla Haimanout to the Basha and Divan of Cairo, I have now here inserted, because I have advanced facts founded upon them.

* See the letter itself, it is the last in Dr. Ouseley's book, and it is true, if I remember rightly

TRANSLATION *of an ARABIC LETTER from the KING of ABYSSINIA to M. DU ROULE.*

“ THE king Tecla Haimanout, king of the established
“ church, son of the king of a thousand churches.

“ THIS letter cometh forth from the venerable, august
“ king, who is the shadow of God, guide of Christian prin-
“ ces that are in the world, the most powerful of the Naza-
“ rean kings, observer of the commandments of the gospel,
“ protector of the confines of Alexandria, he that maintain-
“ eth order between Mahometans and Christians, descended
“ from the family of the prophets David and Solomon, up-
“ on whom being the blessings of Israel, may God make his
“ happiness eternal, and his power perpetual, and protect his
“ arms—So be it.—To his excellence the most virtuous and
“ most prudent man du Roule, a Frenchman sent to us,
“ may God preserve him, and make him arrive at a degree
“ of eminence—So be it.—Elias, your interpreter whom you
“ sent before you, being arrived here, has been well receiv-
“ ed. We have understood that you are sent to us on the
“ part of the king of France our brother, and are surprised
“ that you have been detained at Sennaar. We send to you
“ at present a letter for king Baady, in order that he may
“ set you at liberty, and not do you any injury, nor to those
“ that are with you, but may behave in a manner that is
“ proper both for you and to us, according to the religion
“ of Elias that you sent, who is a Syrian; and all those that
“ may come after you from the king of France our brother,
“ or his consul at Cairo, shall be well received, whether they
“ be

“ be ambaffadors or private merchants, becaufe we love
 “ thofe that are of our religion. We receive with pleafure
 “ thofe who do not oppofe our laws, and we fend away thofe
 “ that do oppofe them. For this reafon we did not receive
 “ immediately Jofeph* with all his companions, not choo-
 “ fing that fuch fort of people fhould appear in our prefence,
 “ nor intending that they fhould pafs Sennaar, in order to
 “ avoid troubles which may occafion the death of many;
 “ but with refpect to you have nothing to fear, you may
 “ come in all fafety, and you fhall be received with ho-
 “ nour.”—Written the 10th of the month Zulkadé, Anno
 1118, *i. e.* the 21ft of January of the year 1706.

↪ THE addrefs is—“ Let the prefent be delivered to M.
 “ du Roule at the town of Sennaar.”

I SHALL only obferve upon this letter, that all the priefts, who had flocked to Sennaar before M. du Roule arrived there, difappeared upon his near approach to that city, after having prepared the mifchief which directly followed. And, no fooner was the murder, which they before concerted, committed, than they all flocked back again as if invited to a feftival. M. de Maillet fpeaks of feveral of them in his letters, where he complains of the murder of du Roule, and fays that they were then on their way to enter Abyffinia. Of thefe probably was this Jofeph, whom Tecla Haimanout ftrictly prohibits to come farther than Sennaar, having feen what his father had written concerning him in the firft letters Elias was charged with.

* Vid. the letter as quoted above.

OTHERS are mentioned in Elias's letter to the consul as having been in Abyssinia. He calls them those of the league of Michael and Samuel, of whom we shall speak afterwards. But, even though the French consul had ordered his nation to drive all the subjects of Sennaar from their houses and service, none of these missionaries were afraid to return and abide at Sennaar, because they knew the murder of the ambassador was the work of their own hands, and, without their instigation, would never have been committed.

THE unlucky messenger, Elias, was again about to enter Sennaar, when he received information that du Roule was assassinated. If he had fled hastily from this inauspicious place upon the murder of Yafous, his haste was now tenfold, as he considered himself engaged in the same circumstances that had involved M. du Roule's attendants in his misfortunes.

THE king, upon hearing the account given by Elias of the melancholy fate of the ambassador at Sennaar, was so exasperated, that he gave immediate orders for recalling such of his troops as he had permitted to go to any considerable distance; and, in a council held for that purpose, he declared, that he considered the death of M. du Roule as an affront that immediately affected his crown and dignity. He was, therefore, determined not to pass it over, but to make the king of Sennaar sensible that he, as well as all the other kings upon earth, knew the necessity of observing the law of nations, and the bad consequence of perpetual retaliations that must follow the violation of it. In the mean time, thinking that the basha of Cairo was the cause of this, he wrote the following letter to him.

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION of an ARABIC LETTER from the KING of ABYSSINIA to the BASHA and DIVAN of CAIRO.

“ To the Pacha, and Lords of the Militia of Cairo.

“ On the part of the king of Abyssinia, the king Tecla Haimanout, son of the king of the church of Abyssinia.

“ ON the part of the august king, the powerful arbiter of
 “ nations, shadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings
 “ who profess the religion of the Messiah, the most powerful
 “ of all Christian kings, he who maintains order between
 “ Mahometans and Christians, protector of the confines of
 “ Alexandria, observer of the commandments of the gospel,
 “ heir from father to son of a most powerful kingdom, descended of the family of David and Solomon,—may the
 “ blessing of Israel be upon our prophet, and upon them!
 “ may his happiness be durable, and his greatness lasting,
 “ and may his powerful army be always feared.—To the
 “ most powerful lord, elevated by his dignity, venerable by
 “ his merits, distinguished by his strength and riches among
 “ all Mahometans, the refuge of all those that reverence
 “ him, who by his prudence governs and directs the armies
 “ of the noble empire, and commands his confines; victorious
 “ viceroy of Egypt, the four corners of which shall be
 “ always respected and defended:—so be it.—And to all the
 “ distinguished princes, judges, men of learning, and other
 “ officers whose business it is to maintain order and good
 “ government and to all commanders in general, may God
 “ preserve them all in their dignities, in the nobleness of
 their

“ their health. You are to know that our ancestors never
 “ bore any envy to other kings, nor did they ever occasion
 “ them any trouble, or shew them any mark of hatred. On the
 “ contrary, they have, upon all occasions, given them proofs of
 “ their friendships, assisting them generously, relieving them
 “ in their necessities, as well in what concerns the caravan
 “ and pilgrims of Mecca in Arabia Felix, as in the Indies, in
 “ *Persia*, and other distant and out-of-the-way places, also by
 “ protecting distinguished persons in every urgent necessity.

“ NEVERTHELESS, the king of France our brother, who
 “ professes our religion and our law, having been induced
 “ thereto, by some advances of friendship on our part such
 “ as are proper, sent an ambassador to us ; I under-
 “ stand that you caused arrest him at Sennaar, and also ano-
 “ ther by name Murat, the Syrian, whom you did put in
 “ prison also, though he was sent to that ambassador on
 “ our part, and by thus doing, you have violated the law of
 “ nations, as ambassadors of kings ought to be at liberty to
 “ go wherever they will ; and it is a general obligation to
 “ treat them with honour, and not to molest or detain them,
 “ nor should they be subject to pay customs, or any sort of
 “ presents. We could very soon repay you in kind, if we
 “ were inclined to revenge the insult you have offered to
 “ the man Murat sent on our part ; the Nile would be suffi-
 “ cient to punish you, since God hath put into our power
 “ his fountain, his outlet, and his increase, and that we can
 “ dispose of the same to do you harm ; for the present we
 “ demand of, and exhort you to desist from any future vex-
 “ ations towards our envoys, and not disturb us by detain-
 “ ing those who shall be sent towards you, but you shall
 “ let them pass and continue their route without delay,

“ coming and going wherever they will freely for their
“ own advantage, whether they are our subjects or French-
“ men, and whatever you shall do to or for them, we shall
“ regard as done to or for ourselves.”

✠ THE address is—“ To the basha, princes, and lords
“ governing the town of great Cairo, may God favour
“ them with his goodness.”

THERE are several things very remarkable in this letter. The king of Abyssinia values himself, and his predecessors, upon never having molested or troubled any of his neighbours who were kings, nor borne any envy towards them. We are not then to believe what we see often in history, that there was frequent war between Sennaar and Abyssinia, or that Sennaar was tributary to Abyssinia. That stripe of country, inhabited by the Shangalla, would, in this case, have been first conquered. But it is more probable, that the great difference of climate which immediately takes place between the two kingdoms, the great want of water on the frontiers, barriers placed there by the hand of Nature, have been the means of keeping these kingdoms from having any mutual concerns; and so, indeed, we may guess by the utter silence of the books, which never mention any war at Sennaar till the beginning of the reign of Socinios.

I APPREHEND, that protecting distinguished persons upon great occasions, alludes to the children of the king of Sennaar, who frequently fly after the death of their father to Abyssinia* for protection, it being the custom of that state
to

* Abdelcader, son of Ounfa, retired here.

to murder all the brothers of the prince that succeeds, instead of sending them to a mountain, as they do in Abyssinia.

THE next thing remarkable is his protection of the pilgrims who go to Mecca, and the merchants that go to India. Several caravans of both set out yearly from his kingdom, all Mahometans, some of whom go to Mecca for religion, the others to India, by Mocha, to trade. But it is not possible to understand how he is to protect the trade in Persia, with which country he certainly has had no sort of concern these 800 years, nor has it been in that time possible for him either to molest or protect a Persian. What, therefore, I would suppose, is, that the king has made use of the common phrase which universally obtains here both in writing and conversation, calling Ber el Ajam the West, and Ber el Arab the East coast of the Red Sea.—Ber el Ajam, in the language of the country, is the coast where there is water or rain, in opposition to the Tehama, or opposite shore of Arabia, where there is no water. The Greeks and Latins translated this word into their own language, but did not understand it; only from the sound they called it Azamia, from Ajam. Now Ajam, or Ber el Ajam, is the name of Persia also; and the French interpreter says, the king of Abyssinia protects the caravans of Persia; when he should say, the caravans, going through Ber el Ajam, the Azamia of the ancients, to embark at the two ports Suakem and Mafuah, both in the country of that name.

THE next thing to remark here is, that the king acknowledges Murat to be his ambassador; and it is the arresting him, which we have seen was done at the instance of M. de Maillet

Maillet collusively, that the king says was a violation of the law of nations ; and it was this insult, done to Murat his ambassador, that he all along complains of, not that offered to du Roule, which he leaves to the king of France ; for he says expressly, if he was to starve, or destroy them all, by stopping the Nile from coming into Egypt, it would be on account of the insult offered to Murat, the envoy, or man, sent on his part to France. It is plain, therefore, that M. de Maillet persecuted the poor Syrian very wrongfully, and that in no one instance, from first to last, was he ever in the right concerning that embassy.

THIS step, which justice dictated, was not without its reward ; for Tecla Haimanout, who had assembled his army on this account sooner than he otherwise intended, found immediately after, that a rival and rebel prince, Amda Sion, was set up against him by the friends of his father Yafous, and that he had been privately collecting troops, intending to take him by surprise, when he was, however, at the head of his army ready to give him battle.

THE first thing the king did was to dispatch a large body of troops to reinforce Dermin, governor of Gojam, and to him he sent positive orders to force Amda Sion to fight wherever he should find him, while he, with the royal army, came forward with all expedition to keep the people in awe, and prevent them from joining his rival.

AMDA SION, on the other hand, lost no time. From Ibaba, through Maitsha, he marched straight to Gondar. Being arrived at the king's house at Dingleber, he sat down on the throne with the ensigns of royalty about him, and there

appointed several officers that were most needed, in the army, the provinces, and about his person. During his stay here, news were brought that Dermin had followed him: step by step in the very track he had marched, and laid the whole country waste that had shewn him any countenance or favour. Amda Sion's heart seemed to fail him upon this; for he left Dingleber, crossed the ford at Delakus, and endeavoured to pass Dermin, by keeping on the west side of the Nile, and on the low road by which he returned to Ibaba.

DERMIN, well-informed as to his motions, and perfectly instructed in the situation of the country, instead of passing him, turned short upon his front, crossing the Nile at Fagitta, and forced him to an engagement in the plain country of Maitsha. The battle, though it was obstinately fought by the rebels, ended in a complete victory in favour of the king. Those among the rebels who most distinguished themselves were the banished monks, the greatest part of whom were slain fighting desperately. Among these, were Abba Wellela Christos, Tobias and his brother Abba Nicolaus, who had been ringleaders in the late religious disputes in the time of Yafous, and were now chiefs of the rebellion against his son.

THE greatest part of the loss fell upon the common men of Gojam, of the clans Elmana and Denfa. No man of note among them was lost; only Amda Sion, who fell at their head in the beginning of the engagement, fighting with all the bravery that could be expected from a man in his circumstances. The rebel army was entirely dispersed.

On

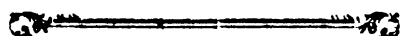
On the king's side no man of consideration was slain, but Anaftè, son of Ozoro Sabel Wenghel.

AFTER having reinforced Dermin, the first thing the king did was to send three of his brothers, David, Hannes, and Jonathàn, to be imprisoned on the mountain of Wechnè. He then marched with his army from Gondar; and, being ignorant of what had happened, he dispatched his master of the horse, by way of Dingleber, to join Kaimati Dermin, in case he had not still been strong enough to fight the rebels. With his main army he took the road to Tedda, intending to proceed to Gojam; but, by the way, was informed that Dermin had defeated and slain his rival Amda Sion: and he had scarce crossed the Nile at Dara, when another messenger arrived with news that Dermin had also come up with Kasmati Honorius and his army on the banks of the Nile, at Goutto, had entirely defeated and slain him, together with his principal officers, and dispersed the whole army. Upon this the king marched towards Ibaba, and was there joined by Dermin, when great rejoicing and feasting ensued for several days.

ON this occasion the king crowned his mother Malacotawit, conferring upon her the dignity and title of Iteghè; the consequence of which station I have often described. Having now no longer enemies to fear, he was persuaded, by some of his favourites, first to dismiss Dermin and his army, then all the troops that had joined him, and go with a few of his attendants, or court, to hunt the buffalo in the neighbouring country, Idi; which council the young prince too rashly adopted, suspecting no treason.

WHILE the hunting-match lasted, a conspiracy was formed by Gueber Mo, his two brothers, Palambaras, Hannes, and several others, old officers belonging to the late king Yafous, who saw that he intended, one by one, to weed them out of the way as soon as safely he could, and that the whole power and favour was at last to fall into the hands of the Iteghé, and her brothers Dermin and Paulus. Accordingly one morning, the conspirators having surrounded him while riding, one of them thrust him through the body with a sword, and threw him from his mule upon the earth. They then laid his body upon a horse, and, with all possible expedition, carried him to the house of Azena Michael, where he arrived yet alive, but died immediately upon being taken from the horse. Badjerund Oufas, and some others of his father's old officers, who had attached themselves to him after his father's death, took the body of the king and buried it in Quebran.

As soon as this assassination was known, the master of the horse, with the few troops that he could gather together, came to the palace, and took a young son of Tecla Haimanout, aged only four years, whom he proclaimed king, and the Iteghé, Malacotawit, regent of the kingdom. But Badjerund Oufas, and those who had not been concerned in the murder of either king, went straight to the mountain of Wechné, and brought thence Tifilis, that is Theophilus, son to Hannes, and brother to the late king Yafous, whom they crowned at Emfras, and called him, by his inauguration name, Atserar Segued.



T I F I L I S.

From 1706 to 1709.

Diffembles with his Brother's Affaffins—Execution of the Regicides—Rebellion and Death of Tigi.

THEOPHILUS, a few days after his coronation, having called the whole court and clergy together, declared to them, that his faith upon the disputable point concerning our Saviour's incarnation was different from that of his brother Yafous, or that of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, but in every respect conformable to that of the monks of Gojam, followers of Abba Euflathius, and that of the Iteghè, Malacotawit, Dermin, and Paulus. A violent clamour was instantly raised against the king by the priests of Debra Libanos, as having forsaken the religious principles of his predecessors. But the king was inflexible; and this ingratiated him more with the inhabitants of Gojam. Not many days after, the king arrested the master of the horse, Johannes Palambaras, the Betwudet Tigi, and several others, all supposed to be concerned in the murder of the late king, and confined them in several places and prisons.

TUIS

THIS last action of the king entirely relieved the minds of all the friends of Tecla Haimanout from any further fear of being called to account for the murder of Yafous ; and, in consequence of this, the queen Malocotawit, with her brothers Dermin and Paulus, and all the murderers of the late king Yafous, came to Gondar that same winter to do homage to Theophilus, whom they now thought their greatest protector.

BUT the wise and sagacious king had kept his secret in his own bosom. All his behaviour hitherto had been only dissimulation, to induce his brother's murderers to come within his power. And no sooner did he see that he had succeeded in this, than the very first day, while they were yet at audience, he ordered an officer, in his own presence, to arrest first the queen, and then her two brothers Dermin and Paulus. He gave the same directions concerning the rest of the conspirators, who were all scattered about Gondar, eating, drinking, and fearing nothing, but rejoicing at the happy days they had promised themselves, and were now to see : he ordered the whole of them, amounting to 37 persons, many of these of the first rank, to be all executed that same forenoon.

HE began with the queen, who was taken immediately from his presence and hanged by the common hangman on the tree before the palace gate ; the first of her rank, it is believed, that ever died so vile a death, either in Abyssinia or any other country, the history of which has come down to our hands. Dermin and Paulus were first carried to the tree to see their sister's execution ; after which, one after the other, they were thrust through with swords, the

weapon with which they had wounded the late king Yafous. But the two Mahometans were shot with muskets, it having been in that manner they had ended the late king's life, after Dermin had wounded him with a sword. As they had committed high treason, none of the bodies of these traitors were allowed to be buried; they were hewn in small pieces with knives, and strewed about the streets, to be eat by the hyenas and dogs; a most barbarous and offensive custom, to which they strictly adhere to this very day.

AFTER having thus taken ample vengeance for the murder of his brother Yafous, Theophilus did not stop here. Tecla Haimanout was, it is true, a parricide, but he was likewise a king, and his nephew; nor did it seem just to Theophilus that it should be left in the will of private subjects, after having acknowledged Tecla Haimanout as their sovereign, to choose a time afterwards, in which they were to cut him off for a crime which, however great, had not hindered them from swearing allegiance to him at his accession, and entering into his service at the time when it was recently committed. He, therefore, ordered all the regicides in custody to be put to death; and sent circular letters to the several governors, that they should observe the same rule as to all those directly concerned in the murder of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, who should be found in places under their command.

TIGI, formerly Betwudet, had been imprisoned in Hamazen, a small district near the Red Sea, under the government of Abba Saluce. This man, by birth a Galla, had escaped from Hamazen, and collected a considerable army of the different tribes of his nation, Liban, Kalkend, and Ballo; and,
having

having found one that pretended to be of the royal blood, he proclaimed him king, and put his army in motion.

UPON the first news of this revolt, the king, though attended with few troops, immediately left Gondar, ordering all those whose duty it was to join him at Ibaba. Having there collected a little army, he marched immediately for the country of the Basso, destroying every thing with fire and sword. Tigi, in the mean time, by forced marches came to Ibaba, where he committed all sorts of cruelties without distinction of age or sex. The cries of the sufferers reached the king, who turned immediately back to the relief of Ibaba; and, not discouraged by his enemy's great superiority of number, offered battle to them as soon as he arrived. Nor did Tigi and his Galla refuse it; but, on the 28th day of March 1709, a very obstinate engagement ensued; where, though the king was inferior in force, yet being himself warlike and active, he was so well seconded by his troops that Basso and Liban were almost entirely cut off.

IN the field of battle there was a church, built by the late king Yafous after a victory gained there over the Pagans, whence it had the name it then bore, Debra Mawea, or the *Mountain of Victory*. A large body of these Galla, seeing that all went against them in the field, fled to the church for a sanctuary, trusting to be protected from the fury of the soldiers by the holiness of the place, and they so far judged well; for the king's troops, though they surrounded the church on every side, did not offer to break into it, or molest the enemy that had sheltered themselves within. Theophilus, informed of this scruple of his soldiers, immediately rode up to them, crying out, "That the church was
 2 " defiled

“ defiled by the entrance of fo many Pagans, and no longer fit for Chriftian worfhip, that they fhould therefore immediately put fire to it, and he would build a nobler one in its place.” The foldiers obeyed without further hefitation; and, with cotton wads wrapt about the balls of their guns, they fet fire to the thatch, with which every church in Abyffinia is covered. The whole was instantly confumed, and every creature within it perifhed. Many principal officers and men of the beft families on the king’s fide, Bille-tana Gueta, Sana Denghei, and Billetana Gueta Kirubel, Ayto Stephenous, fon of Ozoro Salla of Nara, all men of great confideration, were flain that day. What came of the rebel prince was never known. Tigi, with his two fons, fled from the field; but they were met by a peafant, who took them prifoners firft; and, after difcovering who they were, put them all three to death, and brought their heads to the king.

AFTER fo fevere a rebuke, the Galla, on both fides of the Nile, feemed difpofed to be quiet, and the king thereupon returned to Gondar amidft the acclamations of his foldiers and fubjects; but fcarce had he arrived in the capital when he was taken ill of a fever, and died on the 2d of September, and was buried at Tedda, after a reign of three years and three months.



O U S T A S.

From 1709 to 1714.

Ufurps the Crown—Addicted to hunting—Account of the Shangalla—Active and bloody Reign—Entertains Catholic Priests privately—Falls sick and dies ; but how, uncertain.

IT has been already observed in the course of this history, that the Abyssinians, from a very ancient tradition, attribute the foundation of their monarchy to Menilek son of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, or Azab, rendered in the Vulgate, the Queen of the South. The annals of this country mention but two interruptions to have happened, in the lineal succession of the heirs-male of Solomon. The first about the year 960, in the reign of Del Naad, by Judith queen of the Falasha, of which revolution we have already spoken sufficiently. The second interruption happened at the period to which we have now arrived in this history, and owed its origin, not to any misfortune that befel the royal family as in the massacre of Judith, but seemed to be brought about by the peculiar circumstances of the times, from a well-founded attention to self-preservation.

YASOUS

YASOUS the Great, after a long and glorious reign, had been murdered by his son Tecla Haimanout. Two years after, this parricide fell in the same manner. The assassination of two princes, so nearly related, and in so short a time, had involved, from different motives, the greatest part of the noble families of the kingdom, either in the crime itself, or in the suspicion of aiding and abetting it.

UPON the death of Tecla Haimanout, Tiflis, or Theophilus, brother of Yasous, had been brought from the mountain, and placed on the throne as successor to his nephew; this prince was scarcely crowned when he made some very severe examples of the murderers of his brother, and he seemed privately taking informations that would have reached the whole of them, had not death put an end to his inquiries and to his justice.

THE family of king Yasous was very numerous on the mountain. It was the favourite store whence both the soldiery and the citizens chose to bring their princes. There were, at the very instant, many of his sons princes of great hopes and of proper ages. Nothing then was more probable than that the prince, now to succeed, would be of that family, and, as such, interested in pursuing the same measures of vengeance on the murderers of his father and of his brother as the late king Theophilus had done; and how far, or to whom this might extend, was neither certain nor safe to trust to.

THE time was now past when the nobles vied with each other who should be the first to steal away privately, or go with open force, to take the new king from the mountain,

and bring him to Gondar, his capital: A backwardness was visible in the behaviour of each of them, because in each one's breast the fear was the same.

IN so uncommon a conjuncture and disposition of men's minds, a subject had the ambition and boldness to offer himself for king, and he was accordingly elected. This was Oustas *, son of Delba Yafous, by a daughter of the late king of that name; and Abyssinia now saw, for the second time, a stranger seated on the throne of Solomon. Oustas was a man of undisputed merit, and had filled the greatest offices in the state. He had been Badjerund, or master of the household, to the late king Yafous. Tecla Haimanout, who succeeded, had made him governor of Samen; and though, in the next reign, he had fallen into disgrace with Theophilus, this served but to aggrandize him more, as he was very soon after restored to favour, and by this very prince raised to the dignity of Ras, the first place under the king, and invested at once with the government of two provinces, Samen and Tigré. He was, at the death of Theophilus, the greatest subject in Abyssinia; one step higher set him on the throne, and the circumstances of the time invited him to take it. He had every quality of body and mind requisite for a king; but the constitution of his country had made it unlawful for him to reign. He took, upon his inauguration, the name of Tzai Segued.

OUSTAS, though a new king, followed the customs of the ancient monarchs of Abyssinia; for that very reason was
unwilling

unwilling to add novelty to novelty, and it has been a constant practice with these to make a public hunting-match the first expedition of their reign. On these occasions the king, attended by all the great officers of state, whose merit and capacity are already acknowledged, reviews his young nobility, who all appear to the best advantage as to arms, horses, and equipage, with the greatest number of servants and attendants. The scene of this hunting is always in the Kolla, crowded with an immense number of the largest and fiercest wild beasts, elephants, rhinoceros, lions, leopards, panthers, and buffaloes fiercer than them all, wild boars, wild asses, and many varieties of the deer kind.

As soon as the game is roused, and forced out of the wood by the footmen and dogs, they all singly, or several together, according to the size of the beast, or as strength and ability in managing their horses admit, attack the animal upon the plain with long pikes or spears, or two javelins in their hands. The king, unless very young, sits on horse-back on a rising ground, surrounded by the graver sort, who point out to him the names of those of the nobility that are happy enough to distinguish themselves in his fight. The merit of others is known by report.

EACH young man brings before the king's tent, as a trophy, a part of the beast he has slain; the head and skin of a lion or leopard; the scalp or horns of a deer; the private parts of an elephant; the tail of a buffalo, or the horn of a rhinoceros. The great trouble, force, and time necessary to take out the teeth of the elephant, seldom make them ready to be presented with the rest of the spoils; fire, too, is necessary for loosing them from the jaw. The head of a

boar is brought stuck upon a lance ; but is not touched, as being unclean.

THE elephant's teeth are the king's perquisites. Of these round ivory rings are turned for bracelets, and a quantity of them always brought by him to be distributed among the most deserving in the field, and kept ever after as certificates of gallant behaviour. Nor is this mark attended with honour alone. Any man who shall from the king, queen-regent, or governor of a province, receive so many of these rings as shall cover his arm down to his wrist, appears before the twelve judges on a certain day, and there, laying down his arm with these rings upon it, the king's cook breaks every one in its turn with a kind of kitchen-cleaver, whereupon the judges give him a certificate, which proves that he is entitled to a territory, whose revenue must exceed 20 ounces of gold, and this is never either refused or delayed. All the different species of game, however, are not equally rated. He that slays a Galla, or Shangalla, man to man, is entitled to two rings ; he that slays an elephant to two ; a rhinoceros, two ; a giraffa, on account of its speed, and to encourage horsemanship, two ; a buffalo, two ; a lion, two ; a leopard, one ; two boars, whose tusks are grown, one ; and one for every four of the deer kind.

GREAT disputes constantly arise about the killing of these beasts ; to determine which, and prevent feuds and quarrels, a council sits every evening, in which is an officer called *Dimbasba*, or *Red Cap*, from a piece of red silk he wears upon his forehead, leaving the top of his head bare, for no person is allowed to cover his head entirely except the king, the twelve judges, and dignified priests. This of-

ficer regulates the precedence of one nobleman over another, and is possessed of the history of all pedigrees, the noblest of which are always accounted those nearest to the king reigning.

EVERY man pleads his own cause before the council, and receives immediate sentence. It is a settled rule, that those who strike the animal first, if the lance remain upright, or in the same direction in which it enters the beast, are understood to be the slayers of the beast, whatever number combat with him afterwards. There is one exception, however, that if the beast, after receiving the first wound, tho' the lance is in him, should lay hold of a horse or man, so that it is evident he would prevail against them; a buffalo, for example, that should toss a man with his horns, or an elephant that should take a horse with his trunk, the man who shall then slay the beast, and prevent or revenge the death of the man or horse attacked, shall be accounted the slayer of the beast, and entitled to the premium.

THIS was the ancient employment of these councils. In my time they kept up this custom in point of form; the council sat late upon most serious affairs of the nation; and the death, banishment, and degradation of the first men in the kingdom were agitated and determined here under the pretence of sitting to judge the prizes of pastimes. This hunting is seldom prolonged beyond a fortnight.

THE king, from ocular inspection, is presumed to be able to choose among the young nobility those that are ready for taking the necessary charges in the army; and it is from his judgment in this that the priests foretel whether his

his reign is to be a successful one, or to end in misfortune and disappointment.

OUSTAS, having taken a view of his nobility, and attached such to him as were most necessary for his support, set out for this hunting with great preparations. The high country of Abyssinia is destitute of wood; the whole lower part of the mountains is sown with different sorts of grain; the upper part perfectly covered with grass and all sorts of verdure. There are no plains, or very small ones. Such a country, therefore, is unfit for hunting, as it is incapable of either sheltering or nourishing any number of wild beasts.

THE lower country, however, called Kolla, is full of wood, consequently thinly inhabited. The mountains, not joined in chains or ridges, run in one upon the other, but, standing each upon its particular base, are accessible all round, and interspersed with plains. Great rivers falling from the high country with prodigious violence, during the tropical rains, have in the plains washed away the soil down to the solid rock, and formed large basins of great capacity, where, though the water becomes stagnant in pools when the currents fail above, yet, from their great depth and quantity, they resist being consumed by evaporation, being also thick covered with large shady trees whose leaves never fall. These large trees, which, in their growth, and vegetation of their branches, exceed any thing that our imagination can figure, are as necessary for food, as the pools of water are for cisterns to contain drink for those monstrous beasts, such as the elephant and rhinoceros, who there make their constant residence, and who would die with
hunger

hunger and with thirst unless they were thus copiously supplied both with food and water.

THIS country, flat as the deserts on which it borders, has fat black earth for its soil. It is generally about 40 miles broad, though in many places broader and narrower. It reaches from the mountains of the Habab, or Bagla, which run in a ridge, as I have already said, from the south of Abyssinia* north down into Egypt, parallel to the Red Sea, dividing the rainy seasons, and it stretches like a belt from east to west to the banks of the Nile, encircling all the mountainous, or high land part of Abyssinia; which latter country is, at all times, temperate, and often cold, while the other is unwholesome, hazy, close, and intolerably hot.

MANY nations of perfect blacks inhabit this low country, all Pagans, and mortal enemies to the Abyssinian government. Hunting these miserable wretches is the next expedition undertaken by a new king. The season of this is just before the rains, while the poor savage is yet lodged under the trees preparing his food for the approaching winter, before he retires into his caves in the mountain, where he passes that inclement season in constant confinement, but as constant security; for these nations are all Troglodytes, and by the Abyssinians are called Shangalla.

HOWEVER Oufas succeeded in attaching to him those of the nobility that partook of his sports, his good fortune in

* Vid general map.

the capital was not equal to it. A dangerous conspiracy was already forming at Gondar by those very people who had persuaded him to mount the throne, and whom he had left at home, from a persuasion that they only were to be trusted with the support of his interest and the government in his absence.

UPON the first intelligence, the king, with a chosen body of troops, entered Gondar in the night, and surprised the conspirators while actually sitting in council. Ras Hezekias, his prime minister, and Heraclides, master of his household, and five others of the principal confederates, lost their ears and noses, and were thrown into prison in such circumstances that they could not live. Benaia Basilé, one of the principal traitors, and the most obnoxious to the king, escaped for a time, having had already intelligence of Oufas's coming.

THE king having quieted every thing at Gondar, being at peace with all his neighbours, and having no other way to amuse his troops and keep them employed, set out to join the remainder of his young nobility whom he had left in the Kolla to attack the Shangalla.

THE Shangalla were formerly a very numerous people, divided into distinct tribes, or, as it is called, different nations, living each separately in distinct territories, each under the government of the chief of its own name, and each family of that name under the jurisdiction of its own chief, or head.

THESE Shangalla, during the fair half of the year, live under the shade of trees, the lowest branches of which they cut near the stem on the upper part, and then bend, or break them down, planting the ends of the branches in the earth. These branches they cover with the skins of wild beasts. After this they cut away all the small or superfluous branches in the inside, and so form a spacious pavilion, which at a distance appears like a tent, the tree serving for the pole in the middle of it, and the large top overshadowing it so as to make a very picturesque appearance.

EVERY tree then is a house, under which live a multitude of black inhabitants until the tropical rains begin. It is then they hunt the elephant, which they kill by many various devices, as they do the rhinoceros and the other large creatures. Those who reside where water abounds, with the same industry kill the hippopotami, or river-horses, which are exceedingly numerous in the pools of the stagnant rivers. Where this flat belt, or country, is broadest, the trees thickest, and the water in the largest pools, there the most powerful nations live, who have often defeated the royal army of Abyssinia, and constantly laid waste, and sometimes nearly conquered, the provinces of Tigré and Siré, the most warlike and most populous part in Abyssinia.

THE most considerable settlement of this nation is at Amba Tzaada, between the Mareb and Tacazzè, but nearer by one-third to the Mareb, and almost N. W. from Dobarwa. These people, who have a variety of venison, kill it in the fair months, and hang it up, cut into thongs as thick as a man's thumb, like so many ropes, on the trees around them. The sun dries and hardens it to a consistence almost like

leather, or the hardest fish sent from Newfoundland. This is their provision for the winter months: They first beat it with a wooden mallet, then boil it, after which they roast it upon the embers; and it is hard enough after it has undergone all those operations.

THE Dobenah, the most powerful of all the Shangalla, who have a species of supremacy or command over all the rest of the nations, live altogether upon the elephant or rhinoceros. In other countries, where there is less water, fewer trees, and more grass, the Shangalla feed chiefly upon more promiscuous kinds of food, as buffaloes, deer, boars, lions, and serpents. These are the nations nearer the Tacazzé, Ras el Feel, and the plains of Sirè in Abyssinia, the chief of which nations is called Baafa. And still farther west of the Tacazzè, and the valley of Waldubba, is a tribe of these, who live chiefly upon the crocodile, hippopotamus, and other fish; and, in the summer, upon locusts, which they boil first, and afterwards keep dry in baskets, most curiously made with split branches of trees, so closely woven together as to contain water almost as well as a wooden vessel.

THIS nation borders nearly upon the Abyssinian hunting-ground; but, not venturing to extend themselves in the chase of wild beasts, they are confined to the neighbourhood of the Tacazzé, and rivers falling into it, where they fish in safety: the banks of that river are deep, interrupted by steep precipices inaccessible to cavalry, and, from the thickness of the woods, full of thorny trees of innumerable species, almost as impervious to foot. These streams, possessed only by themselves, afford the Baafa the most excellent kinds of fish in the most prodigious plenty.

IN that part of the Shangalla country more to the eastward, about N. N. E. of Amba Tzaada, in the northern extremities of the woody part, where the river Mareb, leaving Dobarwa, flows through thick bushes till it loses itself in the sands, there is a nation of these blacks, who being near the country of the Baharnagash, an officer whose province produces a number of horse, dare not, for that reason, venture to make an extensive use of the variety of wild beasts which throng in the woods to the southward, for fear of being intercepted by their enemy; constantly upon the watch for them; part of his tribute being paid in black slaves. These, therefore, confine themselves to the southern part of their territory, near the Barabra.

THE extraordinary course of this river under the sand, allures to it multitudes of ostriches, which, too, are the food of the Shangalla, as is a beautiful lizard, never, that I know, yet described. These are the food of the eastern Shangalla; and I must here observe, that this country and people were much better known to the ancients than to us. The Egyptians traded with them; and caravans of these people were constantly in Alexandria in the reigns of the first Ptolemies. Most of the productions of these parts, and the people themselves, are mentioned in the remarkable procession made by Ptolemy Philadelphus on his accession to the throne of Egypt, as already observed, though a confusion often arises therein by this country being called by the name of India.

PTOLEMY, the geographer, classes these people exactly enough, and distinguishes them very accurately by their particular food, or dietetique regimen, though he errs, indeed

deed, a little in the particular situation he gives to the different nations. His Rhizophagi, Elephantophagi, Acridophagi, Struthiophagi, and Agriophagi, are all the clans I have just described, existing under the same habits to this day.

THIS soil, called by the Abyssinians *Mazaga*, when wet by the tropical rains, and dissolving into mire, forces these savages to seek for winter-quarters. Their tents under the trees being no longer tenable, they retire with their respective foods, all dried in the sun, into caves dug into the heart of the mountains, which are not in this country basaltes, marble, or alabaster, as is all that ridge which runs down into Egypt along the side of the Red Sea, but are of a soft, gritty, sandy stone, easily excavated and formed into different apartments. Into these, made generally in the steepest part of the mountain, do these savages retire to shun the rains, living upon the flesh they have already prepared in the fair weather.

I CANNOT give over the account of the Shangalla without delivering them again out of their caves, because this return includes the history of an operation never heard of perhaps in Europe, and by which considerable light is thrown upon ancient history. No sooner does the sun pass the zenith, going southward, than the rains instantly cease; and the thick canopy of clouds, which had obscured the sky during their continuance, being removed, the sun appears in a beautiful sky of pale blue, dappled with small thin clouds, which soon after disappear, and leave the heavens of a most beautiful azure. A very few days of the intense heat then dries the ground so perfectly, that it gapes

in chafms; the grafs, ftruck at the roots by the rays, fupports itfelf no more, but droops and becomes parched. To clear this away, the Shangalla fet fire to it, which runs with incredible violence the whole breadth of Africa, paffing under the trees, and following the dry grafs among the branches with fuch velocity as not to hurt the trees, but to occafion every leaf to fall.

A PROPER diftance is preferved between each habitation, and round the principal watering-places; and here the Shangalla again fix their tents in the manner before defcribed. Nothing can be more beautiful than thefe fhady habitations; but they have this fatal effect, that they are difcernible from the high grounds, and guide their enemies to the places inhabited.

THE country now cleared, the hunting begins, and, with the hunting, the danger of the Shangalla. All the governors bordering upon the country, from the Baharnagafh to the Nile on the weft, are obliged to pay a certain number of flaves. Ras el Feel (my government) was alone excepted, for a reafon which, had I ftaid much longer in the country, would probably have been found more advantageous to Abyffinia than all the flaves they procure by the barbarous and prodigal effufion of the blood of thefe unhappy favages; for, when a fettlement of thefe is furprifed, the men are all flaughtered; the women, alfo, are many of them flain, many throw themfelves down precipices, run mad, hang themfelves, or ftarve, obftinately refufing food.

THE boys and girls under 17 and 18 years of age, (the younger the better) are taken and educated by the king, and.

and are servants in all the great houses of Abyssinia. They are instructed early in the Christian religion, and the tallest, handsomest, and best inclined, are the only servants that attend the royal person in his palace. The number of the men was 300 that had horses in my time. They were once 280, and, before my time, less than 200. These are all clothed in coats of mail, and mounted on black horses; always commanded by foreigners devoted entirely to the king's will. By strict attention to their morals, removing all bad examples from among them, giving premiums to those that read most and best, (for they had all time enough upon their hands, especially in winter) and, above all, by the great delight and pleasure the king used to take in conversing with them while alone, countenancing and rewarding them in the line he knew I followed, this body became, as to firmness and coolness in action, equal perhaps to any of the same number in the world; and the greatest difficulty was keeping them together, for all the great men used to wish one of them for the charge of his door, which is a very great trust among the Abyssinians. The king's easiness was constantly prevailed upon to promise such, and great inconvenience always followed this, till Ras Michael discharged this practice by proclamation, and set the example, by returning four that he himself had kept for the purpose before mentioned.

WHILE what I have said is still in memory, I must apply a part of it to explain a passage in Hanno's Periplus. We saw, says that bold navigator, when rowing close along the coast of Africa, rivers of fire, which ran down from the highest mountains, and poured themselves into the sea; this alarmed

alarmed him so much, that he ordered his gallies to keep a considerable offing.

AFTER the fire has consumed all the dry grafs on the plain, and, from it, done the same up to the top of the highest mountain, the large ravines, or gullies, made by the torrents falling from the higher ground, being shaded by their depth, and their being in possession of the last water that runs, are the latest to take fire, though full of every sort of herbage. The large bamboos, hollow canes, and such like plants, growing as thick as they can stand, retain their greenness, and are not dried enough for burning till the fire has cleared the grafs from all the rest of the country. At last, when no other fuel remains, the herdsmen on the top of the mountains set fire to these, and the fire runs down in the very path in which, some months before, the water ran, filling the whole gully with flame, which does not end till it is checked by the ocean below where the torrent of water entered, and where the fuel of course ceases. This I have often seen myself, and been often nearly inclosed in it, and can bear witness, that, at a distance, and by a stranger ignorant of the cause, it would very hardly be distinguished from a river of fire.

THE Shangalla go all naked; they have several wives, and these very prolific. They bring forth children with the utmost ease, and never rest or confine themselves after delivery, but washing themselves and the child with cold water, they wrap it up in a soft cloth made of the bark of trees, and hang it upon a branch, that the large ants, with which they are infested, and the serpents, may not devour it. After a few days, when it has gathered strength, the mother carries

it in the same cloth upon her back, and gives it suck with the breast, which she throws over her shoulder, this part being of such a length as, in some, to reach almost to their knees.

THE Shangalla have but one language, and of a very guttural pronunciation. They worship various trees, serpents, the moon, planets, and stars in certain positions, which I never could so perfectly understand as to give any account of them. A star passing near the horns of the moon denotes the coming of an enemy. They have priests, or rather diviners; but it should seem that these were looked upon as servants of the evil-being, rather than of the good. They prophecy bad events, and think they can afflict their enemies with sickness, even at a distance. They generally wear copper bracelets upon their wrists and arms.

I HAVE said the Shangalla have each several wives. This, however, is not owing to any inordinate propensity of the men to this gratification, but to a much nobler cause, which should make European writers, who object this to them, ashamed at the injustice they do the savage, who all his life, quite the reverse of what is supposed, shews an example of continence and chastity, which the purest and most refined European, with all the advantages of education, cannot pretend to imitate.

It is not the men that seek to avail themselves of the liberty they have by their usages of marrying as often and as many wives as they please. Hemmed in on every side by active and powerful enemies, who consider them as a species of wild beasts, and hunt them precisely as they do
the

the elephant and rhinoceros, placed in a small territory, where they never are removed above 20 miles from these powerful invaders furnished with horses and fire-arms, to both of which they are strangers, they live for part of the fair season in continual apprehension. The other part of the season, when the Abyssinian armies are all collected and abroad with the king, these unhappy savages are constantly employed in a most laborious hunting of large animals, such as the rhinoceros, the elephant, and giraffa; and afterwards, in the no less laborious preparation of the flesh of these quadrupeds, which is to serve them for food during the six months rains, when each family retires to its separate cave in the mountain, and has no intercourse with any of its neighbours, but leaves the country below immersed in a continual deluge of rain. In none of these circumstances, one should imagine, the savage, full of apprehension and care, could have much desire to multiply a race of such wretched beings as he feels himself to be. It is the wife, not the man, that is the cause of this polygamy; and this is surely a strong presumption against what is commonly said of the violence of their inclinations.

ALTHOUGH the Shangalla live in separate tribes, or nations, yet these nations are again subdivided into families, who are governed by their own head, or chief, and of a number of these the nation is composed, who concur in all that regards the measures of defence and offence against their common enemy the Abyssinian and Arab. Whenever an expedition is undertaken by a nation of Shangalla, either against their enemies, the Arabs on the north, or those who are equally their enemies, the Abyssinians on the south, suppose the nation or tribe to be the Baafa, each family attacks

and defends by itself, and theirs is the spoil or plunder who take it.

THE mothers, sensible of the disadvantage of a small family, therefore seek to multiply and increase it by the only means in their power; and it is by their importunity that the husband suffers himself to be overcome. A second wife is courted for him by the first, in nearly the same manner as among the Galla.

I WILL not fear to aver, as far as concerns these Shangalla, or negroes, of Abyssinia, (and, I believe, most others of the same complexion, though of different nations), that the various accounts we have of them are very unfairly stated. To describe them justly, we should see them in their native purity of manners, among their native woods, living on the produce of their own daily labours, without other liquor than that of their own pools and springs, the drinking of which is followed by no intoxication or other pleasure than that of assuaging thirst. After having been torn from their own country and connections, reduced to the condition of brutes, to labour for a being they never before knew; after lying, stealing, and all the long list of European crimes, have been made, as it were, necessary to them, and the delusion occasioned by drinking spirits is found; however short, to be the only remedy that relieves them from reflecting on their present wretched situation, to which, for that reason, they most naturally attach themselves; then, after we have made them monsters, we describe them as such, forgetful that they are now not as their Maker created them, but such as, by teaching them our vices, we have transformed them into, for ends which, I fear, one day will not

not be found a sufficient excuse for the enormities they have occasioned.

I WOULD not, by any means, have my readers so far mistake what I have now said as to think it contains either censure upon, or disapprobation of, the slave-trade. I would be understood to mean just the contrary; that the abuses and neglect of manners, so frequent in our plantations, is what the legislature should direct their coercion against, not against the trade in general, which last measure, executed so suddenly, cannot but contain a degree of injustice towards individuals. It is a shame for any government to say, that enormous cruelties towards any set of men are so evident, and have arrived to such excess, without once having been under consideration of the legislature to correct them. It is a greater shame still for that government to say, that these crimes and abuses are now grown to such a height that wholesome severity cannot eradicate them; and it cannot be any thing but an indication of effeminacy and weakness at once to fall to the destruction of an object of that importance, without having first tried a reformation of those abuses which alone, in the minds of sober men, can make the trade exceptionable.

THE incontinence of these people has been a favourite topic with which blacks have been branded; but, throughout the whole of this history, I have set down only what I have observed, without consulting or troubling myself with the systems or authorities of others, only so far, as having these relations in my recollection, I have compared them with the fact, and found them erroneous. As late as two centuries

centuries ago, Christian priests were the only historians of heathen manners.

IN the number of these Shangalla, or negroes, of which every department of Gondar was full, I never saw any proof of unbridled desires in either sex, but very much the contrary; and I must remark, that every reason in physics strongly militates against the presumption.

THE Shangalla of both sexes, while single, go entirely naked: the married men, indeed, have a very slender covering about their waist, and married women the same. Young men and young women, till long past the age of puberty, are totally uncovered, and in constant conversation and habits with each other, in woods and solitudes, free from constraint, and without any punishment annexed to the transgression. Yet criminal commerce is much less frequent among them than in the same number chosen among Christian nations, where the powerful prejudices of education give great advantage to one sex in subduing their passions, and where the consequences of gratification, which always involve some kind of punishment, keep within bounds the desires of the other.

No one can doubt, but that the constant habit of seeing people of all ages naked at all times, in the ordinary transactions and necessities of life, must greatly check unchaste propensities. But there are still further reasons why, in the nature of things an extraordinary vehemence of passion should not fall to be a distinguishing characteristic among the Shangalla. Fahrenheit's thermometer rises there beyond 100°. A violent relaxation from profuse perspiration must greatly debili-

debilitate the savage. In Arabia and Turkey, where the whole business of man's life is the devoting himself to domestic pleasure, men remain constantly in a sedentary life, eat heartily, avoiding every manner of exercise, or expence of animal spirits by sweats. Their countries, too, are colder than that of the Shangalla, who, living sparingly under a burning sun, and obliged to procure food by laborious hunting, of consequence deprive themselves of that quantity of animal spirits necessary to lead them to any extreme of voluptuousness. And that this is the case is seen in the constitution of the Shangalla women, even though they are without fatigue.

A woman, upon bearing a child or two, at 10 or 11 years old, sees her breast fall immediately down to near her knees*. Her common manner of suckling her children is by carrying them upon her back, as our beggars do, and giving the infant the breast over her shoulders. They rarely are mothers after 22, or begin child-bearing before they are 10; so that the time of child-bearing is but 12 years. In Europe, very many examples there are of women bearing children at 14, the civil law fixes puberty at 12, but by an inuendo† seems to allow it may be something earlier. Women sometimes in Europe bear children at 50. The scale of years of child-bearing between the savage and the European is, therefore, as 12 is to 38. There can be little doubt but their desires are equal to their strength and constitution; but a Shangalla at 22 is more wrinkled and deformed,

deformed, apparently by old age, than is a European woman of 60.

To come still nearer; it is a fact known to naturalists, and which the application of the thermometer sufficiently indicates, that there is a great and sensible difference in the degree of animal heat in both sexes of different nations at the same ages or time of life. The voluptuous Turk estranges himself from the fairest and finest of his Circassian and Georgian women in his seraglio, and, during the warm months in summer, addicts himself only to negro slaves brought from the very latitudes we are now speaking of; the sensible difference of the coolness of their skins leading him to give them the preference at that season. On the other hand, one brown Abyssinian girl, a companion for the winter months, is sold at ten times the price of the fairest Georgian or Circassian beauty, for opposite reasons.

THE very great regard I shall constantly pay my fair readers has made me, as they may perceive, enter as tenderly as possible into these discussions, which, as a philosopher and a historian, I could not, however, wholly omit: the most useful study of mankind is man; and not the least interesting view of him is when, stripped of his vain-glory and the pageantry of palaces, he wanders naked and uncorrupted among his native woods and rivers.

I MUST mention, greatly to the credit of two of the first geniuses of this age, M. de Buffon and Lord Kaimes, that they were both so convinced by the arguments above mentioned, stated in greater detail and with more freedom, that they immediately ordered their bookseller to strike out from the
subsequent

subsequent editions of their work all that had been advanced against the negroes on this head, which they had before drawn from the herd of prejudiced and ignorant compilers, strangers to the manners and language of the people they were dishonouring by their descriptions, after having before abused them by their tyranny.

THE Shangalla have no bread: No grain or pulse will grow in the country. Some of the Arabs, settled at Ras el Feel, have attempted to make bread of the seed of the Guinea grass; but it is very tasteless and bad, of the colour of cow-dung, and quickly producing worms.

THEY are all archers from their infancy. Their bows are all made of wild fennel, thicker than the common proportion, and about seven feet long, and very elastic. The children use the same bow in their infancy that they do when grown up; and are, by reason of its length, for the first years, obliged to hold it parallel, instead of perpendicular to the horizon. Their arrows are full a yard and a half long, with large heads of very bad iron rudely shaped. They are, indeed, the only savages I ever knew that take no pains in the make or ornament of this weapon. A branch of a palm, stripped from the tree and made straight, becomes an arrow; and none of them have wings to them. They have this remarkable custom, which is a religious one; that they fix upon their bows a ring, or thong, of the skin of every beast slain by it, while it is yet raw, from the lizard and serpent up to the elephant. This gradually stiffens the bow, till, being all covered over, it can be no longer bent even by its master. That bow is then hung upon a tree,

and a new one is made in its place, till the same circumstance again happens ; and one of these bows, that which its master liked best, is buried with him in the hopes of its rising again materially with his body, when he shall be endowed with a greater degree of strength, without fear of death, or being subjected to pain, with a capacity to enjoy in excess every human pleasure. There is nothing, however, spiritual in this resurrection, nor what concerns the soul, but it is wholly corporeal and material ; although some writers have plumed themselves upon their fancied discovery of what they call the savages belief of the immortality of the soul.

BEFORE I take leave of this subject, I must again explain, from what I have already said, a difficult passage in classical history. Herodotus * says, that, in the country we have been just now describing, there was a nation called Macrobiani, which was certainly not the real name of the Shangalla, but one the Greeks had given them, from a supposed circumstance of their being remarkable long livers, as that name imports. These were the western Shangalla, situated below Guba and Nuba, the gold country, on both sides of the Nile north of Fazuclo.

THE Guba and the Nuba, and various black nations that inhabit the foot of that large chain of mountains called Dyre and Tegla †, are those in whose countries the finest gold is found; which is washed from the mountains in the time of violent

* Herod. lib. 3, par. 17. & seq. † Supposed to be the Garamantica Vallis of Ptolemy.

violent rains, and lodged in holes, and roots of trees and grafs, by the torrents, and there picked up by the natives ; it is called Tibbar, or, corruptly, gold-dust. The greatest part finds its way to Sennaar by the different merchants, Pagan and Mahometan, from Fazuclo and Sudan. The Agows and Gibbertis also bring a small quantity of it to Gondar, mostly debased by alloy ; but there is no gold in Abyffinia, nor even in Nubia, west of Tchelga, among the Shangalla themselves.

CAMBYSES marched from Egypt expressly with a view of conquering the gold country, and sent messengers before him to the king, or chief of it, requiring his immediate submission. I omit romantic and fabulous circumstances ; but the answer of the king of Macrobia to Cambyfes was, Take this bow, and till you can bring me a man that can bend it, you are not to talk to us of submission. The bow was accordingly carried back with the defiance, but none of the Persian army could bend it. Yet it was their own weapon with which they practised from their infancy ; and we are not to think, had it been possible to bend this bow, but that some of their numerous archers would have done it, for there is no such disproportion in the strength of men. But it was a bow which had lost its elastic force from the circumstance above mentioned, and had been long given up as impossible to be bent by the Macrobia themselves, and was now taken down from the tree where it had probably some time hung, and grown so much the less flexible, and intended to be buried, as these bows are, in the grave with their master, who is to use it, after his resurrection, in another world, where he is to be endowed with strength infinitely

nitely more than human : it is probable this bow would have broke, rather than have bent.

If the situation of these Macrobian in Ptolemy did not put it past dispute that they were Shangalla, we should hesitate much at the characteristic of the nation ; that they were long livers ; none of these nations are so ; I scarcely remember an example fairly vouched of a man past sixty. But there is one circumstance that I think might have fairly led Herodotus into this mistake ; some of the Shangalla kill their sick, weak, and aged people ; there are others that honour old age, and protect it. The Macrobian, I suppose, were of this last kind, who certainly, therefore, had many old men, more than the others. .

I SHALL now just mention one other observation tending to illustrate a passage of ancient history.

HANNO, in his Periplus, remarks, that, while sailing along the coast of Africa, close by the shore, and probably near the low country called Kolla, inhabited by the kind of people we have been just describing, he found an universal silence to prevail the whole day, without any appearance of man or beast : on the contrary, at night, he saw a number of fires, and heard the sound of music and dancing. This has been laughed at as a fairy tale by people who affect to treat Hanno's fragment as spurious ; for my own part, I will not enter into the controversy. .

A VERY great genius, (in some matters, perhaps, the greatest that ever wrote, and in every thing that he writes highly respectable) M. de Montesquieu, is perfectly satisfied that
this

this Periplus * of Hanno is genuine ; and it is a great pleasure again to endeavour to obviate any doubt concerning the authenticity of the work in this second passage, as I have before done in another.

IN countries, such as those that we have been now describing, and such as Hanno was then sailing by, when he made the remark, there is no twilight. The stars, in their full brightness, are in possession of the whole heavens, when in an instant the sun appears without a harbinger, and they all disappear together. We shall say, at sun-rising the thermometer is from 48° to 60° ; at 3 o'clock in the afternoon it is from 100° to 115° ; an universal relaxation, a kind of irresistible languor and aversion to all action takes possession of both man and beast ; the appetite fails, and sleep and quiet are the only things the mind is capable of desiring, or the body enduring : cattle, birds, and beasts all flock to the shade, and to the neighbourhood of running streams ; or deep stagnant pools, and there, avoiding the effects of the scorching sun, pant in quiet and inaction. From the same motive, the wild beast stirs not from his cave ; and for this, too, he has an additional reason, because the cattle he depends upon for his prey do not stroll abroad to feed ; they are asleep and in safety, for with them are their dogs and their shepherds.

BUT no sooner does the sun set, than a cold night instantly succeeds a burning day ; the appetite immediately returns ; the cattle spread themselves abroad to feed, and pass

* Dodswell's dissertation of Hanno's Periplus—Montesquieu, tom. I. lib. 21. cap. 11.

pass quickly out of the shepherds' sight into the reach of a multitude of beasts seeking for their prey. Fires, the only remedy, are everywhere lighted by the shepherds to keep these at a respectful distance; and dancing, singing, and music at once exhilarate the mind, and contribute, by alarming the beasts of prey, to keep their flocks in safety, and prevent the bad effects of severe cold *. This was the cause of the observation Hanno made in sailing along the coast, and it was true when he made it: just the same may be observed still, and will be, so long as the climate and inhabitants are the same.

I HAVE been more particular in the history of this extraordinary nation, because I had, by mere accident, an opportunity of informing myself fully and with certainty concerning it; and, as it is very improbable that such an opportunity will occur again to any European, I hope it will not be ungratefully received.

I SHALL only add an answer to a very obvious question which may occur. Why is it that, in this country, nothing that would make bread will grow? Is it from the ignorance of the inhabitants in not choosing the proper seasons, or is it the imperfection of the soil? To this I answer, Certainly the latter. For the inhabitants of Ras el Feel were used to plow and sow, and did constantly eat bread; but the grain was produced ten or fifteen miles off upon the sides
of

* This sensation of the savage in the heart of Africa seems to be unknown to the enemies of the slave-trade; they talk much of heat, without knowing the material suffering of the negro is from cold.

of the mountains of Abyſſinia, where every certain number of ſoldiers had ſmall farms allowed them for that purpoſe by government; but ſtill they could never bring up a crop in the Mazaga; and the progreſs of the miſcarriage was this: Before the month of May all that black earth was rent into great chafms, trode into duſt, and ventilated with hot winds, ſo as to be a perfect *caput mortuum*, incapable of any vegetation. Upon the firſt ſprinkling of rain the chafms are filled up, and the whole country reſembles dry garden-mould newly dug up. As the ſun advances the rains increaſe; there is no time to be loſt now; this is the ſeaſon for ſowing; let us ſuppoſe wheat. In one night's time, while the wheat is ſwelling in the ground, up grows an immense quantity of indigenous natural graſs, that, having ſowed itſelf laſt year, has lain ever ſince in a natural matrix, ready to ſtart at the moſt convenient ſeaſon. Before the wheat, or any grain ſoever can appear, this graſs has ſhot up ſo high and ſo thick as abſolutely to choke it. Suppoſe it was poſſible to hoe or weed it, the graſs will again overtop the grain before it is an inch from the ground. Say it could be again hoed or cleared, by this time the rains are ſo continual, the black earth becomes a perfect mire. The rain increaſes, and the grain rots without producing any crop.

THE ſame happens to millet, or Indian corn; the rain rots the plant which is thrown down by the wind. It is equally deſtroyed if ſown at the end of the rains; the graſs grows up, wherever the ground is cleared, in a greater proportion, if poſſible, than in the beginning of the year; and the rain ceaſing abruptly, and the ſun beginning to be intenſely hot the very day it paſſes the zenith, the earth is reduced to an

impalpable powder, whilst the grain and plant die without ever shewing a tendency to germinate.

WE left the king, Oustas, after detecting a conspiracy, ready to fall upon some settlement of Shangalla. This he executed with great success, and surrounded a large part of the nation called Baafa, encamped under the trees suspecting no danger. He put the grown people to the sword, and took a prodigious number of children of both sexes captive. He was intending also to push his conquest farther among these savages, when he was called to Gondar by the death of his prime minister and confidant, Ras Fafa Christos.

BESIDES his attention to hunting and government, the king had a very great taste for architecture, which, in Abyssinia, is a very popular one, though scarcely any thing is built but churches. In the season that did not permit him to be in the field, he bestowed a great deal of leisure and money this way; and he was, at this time, busy erecting a magnificent church to the Nativity, about a mile below Gondar, on the small river Kahha.

BUT the season of hunting returning before he had finished it, he left it to repair to Bet Malo, a place in the Kolla, where he had built a hunting-seat, not far distant from the Shangalla, called Baafa. Here he had a most successful hunting-match of the buffalo, rhinoceros, and elephant, in which he often put himself in great danger, and distinguished himself in dexterity and horsemanship greatly above any of his court. He returned upon news, that persons, whom he had secretly employed, had apprehended Betwudet Basilé, and his son Claudius, who had escaped when

when the last conspirators were seized. Both these he sentenced immediately to lose their eyes.

THESE hunting-matches, so punctually observed, and so eagerly followed by a man already past the flower of his youth, had, in their first appearance, nothing but sound policy. The king's title was avowedly a faulty one; and the many conspiracies that had been formed had shewn him the nobility were not all of them disposed to bear his yoke; nothing then was more political than to keep a considerable number of them employed in field-exercises, to be informed of their inclinations, and to attach them to his person by favours. At the head of this little, but very active army, he was ready in a moment to fall upon the disaffected, before they could collect strength sufficient for resistance. Time, however, shewed this was not entirely the reason of these continual intervals of absence for so long a time in the Kolla.

NOTWITHSTANDING the misfortune that had befallen the French ambassador, M. du Roule, at Sennaar, in the reign of Yafous I. and Tecla Haimanout his son, under Baady el Ahmer, there had still remained below, in Atbara, some of those missionaries who had courage and address enough to attempt the journey into Abyssinia, and they succeeded in it. Oufas had probably been privy to their arrival in Yafous's time, and had, equally with him, a favourable opinion of the Romish religion.

THESE missionaries, though Yafous was now dead, were perfectly well received by Oufas; he had given them in charge to Ain Egzie, an old and loyal servant of Yafous,

and governor of Walkayt. He had placed also with them an Abyſſinian prieſt, who had been in Jeruſalem, and was well-affected to the Romiſh faith, to be their interpreter, ſtay with them always, and manage their intereſts, while he himſelf, ſtealing frequently from the hunting-matches, heard maſs, and received the communion, returning back to his camp, as he flattered himſelf, unperceived. Theſe meetings with the prieſts were not, however, ſo well concealed but that they came to the knowledge of many people about court, both ſeculars and clergy. But the king's character, for ſeverity and vigilance, made everybody confine their thoughts, whatever they were, within their own breſts.

THE employment of this year was a ſhort journey to Iba-ba, a large market-town, where there is a royal reſidence, below Maitſha, on the weſt, or Gojam ſide of the Nile, from which it is about three days diſtance. From this he returned again, and went to Tcherkin, a ſmall village in Kolla, beyond Ras el Feel, in the way to Sennaar, the principal abode of the elephant. But, in the firſt day's hunting, Yared, maſter of his houſehold, and a conſiderable favourite, being torn to pieces by one of theſe quadrupeds, he gave over the ſport, and returned very ſorrowful to bury him at Gondar, leaving three of his ſervants to execute a deſign he had formed againſt the Baafâ in that neighbourhood.

FROM the conſtant interruptions Oufas had met with in all theſe hunting-matches, and his ſucceſs, notwithſtanding, whenever he had himſelf attended, the divining monks had propheſied his reign was to be ſhort, and attended with much bloodſhed; nor were they for once diſtant from the truth; for, in the month of January 1714, while he was overlook-

looking the workmen building the church of Abba Antonius at Gondar, he was taken suddenly ill, and, suspecting some unwholsomeness or *witchcraft* in his palace, he ordered his tent to be pitched without the town till the apartments should be smoaked with gunpowder. But this was done so carelessly by his servants, that his house was burnt to the ground, which was looked upon as a very bad omen, and made a great impression upon the minds of the people.

THE 27th of January it was generally understood that the king was dangerously ill, and that his complaint was every day increasing. Upon this the principal officers went, according to the usual custom, to condole with and comfort him. This was at least what they pretended. Their true errand, however, was pretty well known to be an endeavour to ascertain whether the sickness was of the kind likely to continue, till measures could be adopted with a degree of certainty to take the reins of government out of his hand.

THE king easily divined the reason of their coming. Having had a good night, he used the strength that he had thereby acquired to rouse himself for a moment, to put on the appearance of health, and shew himself, as usual, engaged in his ordinary dispatch of business. The seeming good countenance of the king made their condolence premature. Some excuse, however, for so formal a visit, was necessary; but every apology was not safe. They adopted this, which they thought unexceptionable, that hearing he was sick, which they happily found he was not, they came to propose to him a thing equally proper whether he was sick or well; that he would, in time, settle the succession upon his son

Fafil, then in the mountain of Wechnè, as a means of quieting the minds of his friends, preventing bloodshed, and securing the crown to his family.

OUSTAS did the utmost to command himself upon this occasion, and to give them an answer such as suited a man in health who hoped to live many years. But it was now too late to play such a part ; and, in spite of his utmost dissimulation, evident signs of decay appeared upon him, which his visitors conjectured would soon be past dissembling, and they agreed to stay with the king till the evening.

BUT the foldiers on guard, who heard the proposal of sending for Oustas's son, and who really believed that these men spoke from their heart, and were in earnest, were violently discontented and angry at this proposal. They began to be weary of novelty, and longed for a king of the ancient royal family. As soon, therefore, as it was dark they entered Gondar, and called together the several regiments, or bodies of foldiers, which composed the king's household. Having come to a resolution how they were to act, they returned to their quarters where they were upon guard, and meeting the great officers coming out of Oustas's tent, where they, too, had probably agreed upon the same measure, though it was not known, the foldiers drew their swords, and slew them all, being seven in number. Among these were Berwudet Tamerté, and the Acab Saat ; the one the principal lay-officer, the other the chief ecclesiastic in the king's house.

THIS massacre seemed to be the signal for a general insurrection, in the course of which, part of the town was
set

set on fire. But the soldiers, at their first meeting in the palace *, had shut up the coronation-chamber, and the other royal apartments, and possessed themselves of the kettle-drum by which all proclamations were made at the gate, driving away, and rudely treating the multitude on every side. At last they brought out the drum, though it was yet night, and made this proclamation :—" David, son of our late king Yafous, is our king." The tumult and disorder, nevertheless, still continued ; during all which, it was very remarkable no one ever thought of offering an injury to Oufas.

WHILE these things were passing at Gondar, a violent alarm had seized all the princes upon the mountain of Wechnè. They had been treated with severity during Oufas's whole reign. Their revenues had been withheld, or at least not regularly paid, and they had been reduced nearly to perish for want of the necessaries of life. When, therefore, the accounts of Oufas's illness arrived, and that the principal

* There seems here some contradiction which needs explanation. It is said that the palace was burnt before Oufas went to his tent. How then could the soldiers assemble in it afterwards ? The palace consists of a number of separate houses at no great distance, but detached from one another with one room in each. That where the coronation is performed is called Anbasa Bet ; another, where the king sits in festivals, is called Zeffan Bet ; another is called Werk Sacala, the gold-house ; another Gimja Bet, or the brocade-house, where the wardrobe and the gold stuffs used for presents, or received as such, are laid. Now, we suppose Oufas in any one of these apartments, say Zeffan Bet, which he left to go to his tent, and it was then burnt ; still there remained the coronation-house where the regalia was kept, which the soldiers locked up that it might not be used to crown Fasil, Oufas's son, whom they thought the seven great men they had murdered conspired to place upon the throne after his father.

pal people had proposed to name Fasil his son, then their fellow-prisoner, to succeed him, their fears no longer reminded them of the hardships of his father's reign, as they expected utter extirpation as the only measure by which he could provide for his own security. Full of these fears, they agreed, with one consent, to let down from the mountain fifty princes of the greatest hopes, all in the prime of life, and therefore most capable of defending their own right, and securing the lives of those that remained upon the mountain, from the cruel treatment they must obviously expect if they fell into the hand of an usurper or stranger.

THE brother of Betwudet Tamerté, who, with the six others, had been murdered before Oufas's tent, was, at this time, guardian of the mountain of Wechné. His brother's death, however, and the unsettled state of government, had so much weakened both his authority and attention, that he either did not choose, or was not able, to prevent the escape of these princes, all flying for their lives, and for the sake of preserving the ancient constitution of their country. And that this, and no other was their object, appeared the instant the danger was removed; for, as soon as the news that David was proclaimed at Gondar arrived at the mountain, all the princes returned of their own accord, excepting Baccuffa, younger brother to the king, who fled to the Galla, and lay concealed among them for a time.

ON David's arrival at Gondar, all the old misfortunes seemed to be forgotten. The joy of having the ancient royal line restored, got the better of those fears which first occasioned the interruption. The prisons were thrown open,
and

and David was crowned the 30th of January 1714, amidst the acclamations of all ranks of people, and every demonstration of festivity and joy.

DAVID was son of Yafous the Great, and consequently brother to the parricide Tecla Haimanout, but by another mother. At his coronation he was just twenty-one years of age, and took for his inauguration name Adebar Segued.

IN all this time, however, Oufas was alive. Oufas was, indeed, sick, but still he was king; and yet it is surprising that David had been now nine days at Gondar, and no injury had been offered to Oufas, nor any escape attempted for him by his friends.

It was the 6th of February, the day before Lent, when the king sent the Abuna Marcus, Itchegué Za Michael, with some of the great officers of state, to interrogate Oufas judicially, for form's sake, as to his title to the crown. The questions proposed are very short and simple—"Who are you? What brought you here?" To these plain interrogatories, Oufas, then struggling with death, answered, however, as plainly, and without equivocation, "Tell my king David, that true it is I have made myself king, as much as one can be that is not of the royal family; for I am but a private man, son of a subject, Kasmati Delba Yafous: all I beg of the king is to give me a little time, and let me die with sickness, as I shortly shall, without putting me to torment or pain."

ON the 10th day of February, that is four days after the interrogation, Oufas died, but whether of a violent or natural

tural death is not known. The historian of his reign, a cotemporary writer, says, some reported that he died of an amputation of his leg by order of the king ; others, that he was strangled ; but that most people were of opinion that he died of sickness ; and this I think the most probable, for had the king been earnestly set upon his death, he would not have allowed so much time to pass, after his coronation, before his rival was interrogated ; nor was there any reason to allow him four days after his confession. David's moderation after the death, moreover, seems to render this still more credible ; for he ordered his body to be buried in the church of the Nativity, which he had himself built, with all the honours and public ceremonies due to his rank as a nobleman and subject, who had been guilty of no crime, instead of ordering his body to be hewn in pieces, and scattered along the ground without burial, to be eat by the dogs ; the invariable punishment, unless in this one instance, of high-treason in this country.

POSTERITY, regarding his merit more than his title, have, however, kept his name still among the list of kings ; and tradition, doing him more justice still than history, has ranked him among the best that ever reigned in Abyffinia.



D A V I D IV.

From 1714 to 1719.

Convocation of the Clergy—Catholic Priests executed—A second Convocation—Clergy insult the King—His severe Punishment—King dies of Poison.

THE moderation of the king, both before and after the death of Oustas, and perhaps some other favourable appearances now unknown to us, set the monks, the constant pryers into futurity, upon prophesying that the reign of this prince was to be equal in length to that of his father Yafous the Great, and that it was to be peaceable, full of justice and moderation, without execution, or effusion of civil blood.

DAVID, immediately upon his accession, appointed Fit-Auraris Agnè, Ozoro Keduste's brother*, his Betwudet, and

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Abra

* Mistress to Yafous, and mother to David.

Abra Hezekias his master of the household ; and was proceeding to fill up the inferior posts of government, when he was interrupted by the clamours of a multitude of monks demanding a convocation of the clergy.

THESE assemblies, however often solicited, are never called in the reign of vigorous princes, but by the special order of the sovereign, who grants or refuses them purely from his own free-will. They are, however, particularly expected at the accession of a new prince, upon any apprehension of heresy, or any novelty or abuse in church-government.

THE arrival of a new Abuna from Egypt is also a very principal reason for the convocation. These assemblies are very numerous. Many of the most discreet members of the church absent themselves purposely. On the other hand, the monks, who, by vows, have bound themselves to the most painful austerities and sufferings ; those that devote themselves to pass their lives in the deep and unwholesome valleys of the country ; hermits that starve on the points of cold rocks ; others that live in deserts surrounded with, and perpetually exposed to wild beasts ; in a word, the whole tribe of fanatics, false prophets, diviners, and dreamers, people who affect to see and foreknow what is in future to happen, by living in perfect ignorance of what is passing at the present ; people in constant habits of dirt and nastiness, naked, or covered with hair ; in short, a collection of monsters, scarcely to be described or conceived, compose an ecclesiastical assembly in Abyssinia, and are the leaders of an ignorant and furious populace, who adore them as saints, and are always ready to support them in some violation of the

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the laws of the country, or of humanity, to which, by their customs and manner of life, their very first appearance shews they have been long strangers.

DAVID, however averse to these assemblies, could not decently refuse them, now a new prince was set on the throne, a new Abuna was come from Egypt, and a complaint was ready to be brought that the church was in danger. The assembly met in the usual place before the palace. The Itchegué, or head of the monks of Debra Libanos, was ready with a complaint, which he preferred to the king. He stated it was notorious, but offered to prove it if denied, that three Romish priests, with an Abyssinian for their interpreter, were then established in Walkayt, and, for several years, had been there maintained, protected, and consulted by the late king Oufas, who had often assisted at the celebration of mass as solemnized by the church of Rome.

DAVID was a rigid adherent to the church of Alexandria, and educated by his mother in the tenets of the monks of Saint Eustathius, that is, the most declared enemies of every thing approaching to the tenets of the church of Rome. He was consequently, not by inclination, neither was he by duty, obliged to undertake the defence of measures adopted by Oufas, of which he was besides ignorant, having been confined in the mountain of Wechne. He ordered, therefore, the missionaries, and their interpreter, whose name was Abba Gregorius, to be apprehended.

THESE unfortunate people were accordingly produced before the most prejudiced and partial of all tribunals. Abba Masmarè and Aduḡ Tesfo were adduced to interrogate and

to interpret to them, as they understood the Arabic, having been at Cairo and Jerusalem. The trial neither was, nor was intended to be long. The first question put was a very direct one; Do you, or do you not, receive the council of Chalcedon as a rule of faith? and, Do you believe that Leo the pope lawfully and regularly presided at it, and conducted it? To this the prisoners plainly answered, That they looked upon the council of Chalcedon as the fourth general council, and received it as such, and as a rule of faith: that they did believe pope Leo lawfully and regularly presided at it, as being head of the Catholic church, successor to St Peter, and Christ's vicar upon earth. Upon this a general shout was heard from the whole assembly; and the fatal cry, "Stone them."—"Whoever throws not three stones, he is accursed, and an enemy to Mary," immediately followed.

ONE priest only, distinguished for piety and learning among his countrymen, and one of the chief men in the assembly, with great vehemence declared, they were tried partially and unfairly, and condemned unjustly. But his voice was not heard amidst the clamours of such a multitude; and the monks were accordingly by the judges condemned to die. Ropes were instantly thrown about their necks, and they were dragged to a place behind the church of Abbo, in the way to Tedda, where they were, according to their sentence, stoned to death, suffering with a patience and resignation equal to the first martyrs.

THE justice, however, which we owe to the memory of the deceased M. du Roule, must always leave a fear in every Christian mind, that, spotted as these missionaries were with the horrid crime of the premeditated, unprovoked murder
of.

of that ambassador, the indifference they testified at the approach, and in the immediate suffering of death, had its origin rather in hardness of heart than in the quietness of their consciences. Many fanatics have been known to die, glorying in having perpetrated the most horrid crimes to which the sentence of eternal damnation is certainly annexed in the book before them.

I HAVE often, both on purpose and by accident, passed by this place, where three large, and one small pile of stones, cover the bodies of these unfortunate sufferers; and, with many heavy reflections upon my own danger, I have often wondered how these three priests, of whatever nation they were, passed unnoticed among the number of their fraternity, whose memory is honoured with long panegyrics by the Romish writers of those times, as destined one day to appear in the kalendar. Though those that compose the long list of Tellez died with piety and resignation, they were surely guilty in the way they almost all were engaged, contrary to the laws and constitution of the country, in actions and designs that can be fairly qualified by no other name than that of treason, while no such political meddling out of their profession ever was reproached to these three, even by their enemies.

TELLEZ says not a word of them; Le Grande, a zealous Catholic writer of these times, but little; though he publishes an Arabic letter to consul Maillet, which mentions their names, their sufferings, and other circumstances attending them. I shall, therefore, take the liberty of offering my conjecture, as I think this silence, or the suppression
of

of a fact, gives me a title to do ; but shall first produce the letter of Elias Enoch, upon which I found my judgment.

TRANSLATION *of an* ARABIC LETTER *wrote to* M. DE MAILLET.

“ AFTER having assured M. de Maillet, the consul, of my
 “ respects, and of the continuation of my prayers for his
 “ health, as being a gentleman venerable for his merits,
 “ distinguished by his knowledge and great penetration,
 “ of a noble birth, always beneficent, and addicted to pious
 “ actions, (may God preserve his life to that degree of ho-
 “ nour due to so respectable a person), I now write you from
 “ the town of Mocha. I left Abyssinia in the year 1718, and
 “ came to this town of Mocha in extreme poverty, or ra-
 “ ther absolutely destitute. God has assisted me: I give
 “ praise to him for his bounty, and always remain much ob-
 “ bliged to you. What follows is all that I can inform you
 “ as touching the news of Abyssinia. King Yafous is long
 “ since dead: his son, Tecla Haimanout, having seized upon
 “ the kingdom by force, caused his father to be assassinated.
 “ This king Yafous, having given me leave to go to Sennaar,
 “ furnished me with a letter addressed to the king there, in
 “ which he desired him to put no obstacles in the way of
 “ du Roule the French ambassador’s journey, but to suffer
 “ him to enter Ethiopia. He also gave me another letter
 “ addressed to the basha and officers of Grand Cairo; and
 “ another letter to the ambassador himself, by which he sig-
 “ nified to him that he might enter into Ethiopia without
 “ fear. Accordingly I had departed with these letters for Sen-
 “ naar; but king Tecla Haimanout, son of king Yafous, ha-
 “ ving taken possession of the kingdom while I was yet in
 “ Abyssinia,

“ Abyssinia, I returned and delivered to him the letters
“ which had been given me by his father. It was now
“ three months since Tecla Haimanout had been upon the
“ throne ; he approved of the letters, and caused them to
“ be transcribed in his own name ; and ordered me to go
“ and join du Roule the ambassador, and accompany him
“ back again to Gondar. King Yafous had already sent an
“ officer to meet the ambassador at Sennaar ; and he had
“ been gone six months without my knowledge ; but that
“ officer, having trifled away his time in trading, did not
“ enter Sennaar till that king had caused the ambassador
“ to be murdered, together with those that were with him.
“ As for me, not knowing what had happened, I was ad-
“ vancing with the orders of Tecla Haimanout, when, being
“ now within three days journey of Sennaar, I heard of the
“ ambassador’s death, and that of his companions ; and
“ being terrified at this, I returned into Abyssinia to let
“ Tecla Haimanout know what the king of Sennaar had
“ done. Immediately upon hearing of this, Tecla Haima-
“ nout formed a resolution to declare war against the king
“ of Sennaar, but was soon after slain in a mutiny of the
“ soldiers. He reigned two years. Tiflis, brother of Ya-
“ fous, succeeded him, and reigned three years and three
“ months. Oustas, nephew of king Yafous, succeeded Ti-
“ filis, and usurped the kingdom, of which he was actual-
“ ly prime minister, being son of a sister of Yafous. Oustas
“ was dethroned, and died soon after. David, son of Ya-
“ fous, succeeded him, and reigned five years and five
“ months. The *friars*, who arrived in Ethiopia in the reign
“ of Oustas, were stoned to death, upon the succession of
“ David to the throne, by those that were of the party of
“ David. A son of *Michael*, whom he had by a slave, aged

“ only six years, was stoned with him. It was the *fourth* son he had. I made Yafous believe that the religion of the French was the same with that of Ethiopia,” &c. &c.

FROM this letter, we see a boy of six years old, son of one of these priests or friars, was stoned to death with them; and his heap of stones appears with those of the others. It was, indeed, a common test of the people suspected to be priests, who stole into Abyssinia, to offer them women, their vows being known, and that they could not marry. I apprehend, to avoid detection, one at least of them had broken his vow of celibacy and chastity, and that this child was the consequence, but not the only one, as Enoch says, in his letter, he had three others; and this probably was the reason why the Catholics of those times had consigned their merit to oblivion, rather than record it with their failings.

FOR although we know that there were friars who had been in Ethiopia since the time of Oufas, we should not have been informed who they were, had it not been for a small sheet, published at Rome in the year 1774, by a capuchin priest called Theodosius Volpi, sent to me by my learned and worthy friend the honourable Daines Barrington. From this we find, that these three were, Liberato de Wics, apostolical prefect in Austria; Michael Pius of Zerbe, in the province of Padua; and Samuel de Beumo, of the Milanese. The account of their death is the same as already given, though the publisher suppresses the stoning of the child, and the existence of the three other, fruits of the seraphic mission, through the endeavours of father Michael Pius of Zerbe, of the province of Milan. The child, too, stoned to death with his father, was six years old, and was, as Elias says,

says, fourth son of Michael; and it was in 1714 this catastrophe happened, so that this will bring these fathers entrance into Nubia about the time of the murder of M. de Roule: so consistent with every crime is fanaticism and false religion.

THE barbarous monks, gratified in the first instance, would not be contented without extending their vengeance to Abba Gregorius, the Abyssinian priest, the interpreter. But David, who found upon trial that, in going to attend the priests in Walkayt, he had only obeyed the express command of Oustas, then his sovereign, absolutely refused to suffer him to be either tried or punished, but dismissed him, without further censure or question, to his native country.

WHILE David was thus employed at Gondar, news were brought to him that his brother Bacussa had left the Galla, and was then in a small town in Begemder, called Wetan. It was this prince who, together with fifty others of the royal family, were let down from the mountain of Wechné, upon Oustas's son being proposed, and he alone refused to return upon his brother's accession to the throne. David sent Azalelli, Guebra Mehedin, and Badjerund Welled de l'Oul, to Wetan, where they apprehended Bacussa by surprise, and lodged him in the mountain of Wechné, after having cut off a very small part of the tip of his nose, which was scarcely discernible when he came to the throne.

Kasmati Georgis, had been banished to the mountain in the reign of the late king, where he had contracted an intimate friendship with David. He had also married a sister of Ozoro Mamet, by whom Yafous had several children, par-

ticularly one Welleta Georgis, a prince then of years to govern, and confined to the mountain. David, on his coming to the throne, did not forget his old friendship on the mountain; and, passing by Emfras, he sent to Wechné to bring down Kafmati Georgis to Arringo, one of the king's palaces in Begemder, where he intended to pass the summer. On his return he gave him the government of Gojam; and his favourite Agné, his uncle, dying at this time, very much regretted, Georgis was also created Betwudet in his place.

THIS year Abuna Marcus died; and his successor, Abuna Christodulus, arriving the third day of November, this made the calling of another assembly of the clergy absolutely necessary, although, from the humour the last was in, the whole time of their meeting, the king was very little inclined to it.

THE monks in Abyssinia, as I have often said, are divided into two bodies, those of Debra Libanos and those of Abba Eustathius. Some have imagined that the difference between these two bodies arises from a dispute about two natures in Christ. But this is from misinformation; for, were a dispute to arise about the two natures in Christ, each party would declare the other a heretic; but at present a few equivocal words, used to define the mode and moment of our Saviour's incarnation, though neither opinion is thought heretical*, have the effect to make these two sects enemies all their lives.

THE

* But there can be no doubt both opinions are absolute heresy, in the most liberal sense of that word, as expressly denying our Saviour's consubstantiality

THE Abuna is the head of the Abyssinian church; yet, as he is known to be a slave of the Mahometans, upon his first arrival, and permission obtained from the king, the assembly meets in a large outer court, or square, before the palace, where he is interrogated, and where he declares which of the two opinions he adopts. If he has been properly advised, he declares for the ruling and strongest party; though sometimes he is determined, by the address of those about him, to side with the weakest; and very often, if he has had no instruction on his arrival, he does not know what this reference means; for no trace of such dispute exists among his brethren in Cairo, from whence he came. He is, moreover, a stranger to the language, and the words containing either opinion, which, for shortness sake, are made to mean a great deal more than they at first seem to import; and, whether freely or literally translated, are equally unintelligible to a foreigner. After the Abuna has declared his choice, this is announced by beat of drum to the people, and is called *Nagar Haimanout*, or, the Proclamation of the Faith. The only ordinary effect this declaration has, is to make the person who is at the head of one party an adversary to him who is the head of the other, all his life after.

THE king at his accession makes his declaration also. The clergy maintain, that he should do this in an assembly called for that purpose, though the king denies that there is any necessity for the clergy to be present; but he considers it as his privilege to choose his own time and place, and announces it to the people, by proclamation, at what time, and in what manner, he thinks most convenient.

TRAVELS TO DISCOVER

ALTHOUGH David had given his permission to assemble the clergy to hear the Abuna's declaration, he did not think himself bound to assist at it, and, therefore, he sent to the monks of Debra Libanos, and those of Abba Eustathius, to go to the Abuna with Betwudet Georgis, who should interrogate the Abuna, and report the answer to the king, who thereupon would order it to be proclaimed to the people. The monks of Debra Libanos refused this, as they did not consider Georgis as indifferent, being known to be a staunch Eustathian. They declared, therefore, they would neither hear nor regard what the Abuna said, unless it was in the king's presence; and this was just what David was resolved not to humour them in.

BETWUDET GEORGIS, the great officers of state, and most of the people of consideration about Gondar, waited upon the Abuna as the king had commanded; and the Betwudet having desired him to make his profession, he would only give this evasive answer, That his faith was in all respects the same as that of Abba Marcos and Abba Sanuda, the ancient and orthodox Abunas.

THIS answer left every party at liberty to imagine that the Abuna was their own. But this evasion did not content the king, who therefore ordered the Betwudet, without taking further notice of the Abuna, to make proclamation in terms of the profession of the monks of Abba Eustathius. This occasioned great heats among the monks of Debra Libanos. They ran all with one accord to the Itcheguè's house, for he is their general, or chief of their convent, and here they came to the most violent resolutions, declaring that they would die either together, or man by man,

in support of their privileges and the freedom of their assemblies. From the Itchegué's house they ran to the Abuna's, without soliciting or receiving any permission from the king; and, upon interrogation, they succeeded with the Abuna to the height of their wishes; for he answered in the precise words of their profession—"One God, of the Father alone, united to a body perfectly human, consubstantial with ours, and by that union becoming the Messiah;" in direct opposition to what was proclaimed by the king's order at the gate of the palace the day before—Perfect God and perfect man, by the union one Christ, whose body is composed of a precious substance, called *Babery*, not consubstantial with ours, or derived from his mother.

HAD they stopt here it had been well; but the victory was too great, too unexpected, and complete, to admit of their sitting quietly down without a triumph. They returned, therefore, from the Abuna's, frantic with joy, shouting, and singing, and more peculiarly one kind of song, or hallelujah, used always upon victories obtained over infidels. As they passed the door of the king's palace, some of the officers of the household, Azage Zakery, Azage Tecla Haimanout, and Badjerund Welleta David, moderate men, lovers of peace, and inclined to no party, endeavoured to persuade them to content themselves with what they had done, to disperse, and each go to his home, before some mischief overtook them. But they were too high-minded. They redoubled their songs; and, in this manner, again assembled in the Itchegué's house to deliberate on what further they were to attempt; when one of the monks, a prophet, or dreamer, declared, "That God had opened his eyes, and that he then saw a cherub with a flaming sword guarding the

the

the Itchegué's gate:" with such a sentinel they concluded that they were perfectly safe from any attempts of man.

In the mean time, however, the king was violently affected at the seditious behaviour of the monks; nor did he hesitate a moment in what manner he was to punish it. As they had employed the song which was sung only for victories obtained over infidels, by which they meant to allude particularly to the king, he detached a body of Pagan Galla to punish them; having surrounded the Itcheguè's house, where the monks were assembled, they forced open the gate, (and the cherub with the flaming sword not interfering) they fell, sword in hand, upon the unarmed priests, and in an instant laid above a hundred of the principal of them dead upon the floor. They then sallied out with their bloody weapons into the street, and hewed to pieces those that attended the procession, and who were still diverting themselves with their song. Gondar now appeared like a town taken by storm; every street was covered with the dead, and dying; and this massacre continued till next day at noon, when, by proclamation, the king ordered it to cease.

DAVID, now satisfied as to the priests, thought he owed to the Abuna a mortification for his double-dealing. He sent, therefore, the soldiers to take him out of his house, and bring him to the gate of the palace, where the poor wretch, half dead with fear, expected every moment to fall by the bloody hands of the Djawi. Having enjoyed his panic some time, the king ordered him to be placed close beside the kettle-drum, and a profession of faith was made in the royal presence, and announced by beat of drum to the people, agreeing in every respect to that published the first day by

Betwudet Georgis, and directly contradicting what he had said with his own mouth to the monks of Debra Libanos, which was the occasion of the riot.

THIS bloody, indiscriminate massacre had comprehended too many men of worth and distinction not to occasion great discontent among the principal people both within and without the palace. Conspiracies against the king were now everywhere openly talked of, the fruits of which soon appeared. David fell sick, and those about him endeavoured to persuade him that it was the remains of an injury which he had lately received from a fall off his horse. But, upon the meeting of a council on the 9th of March 1719, it was discovered and proved, that Kasmati Laté and Ras Georgis had employed Kutcho, keeper of the palace, to give a strong poison to the king, which he had taken that morning from the hands of a Mahometan. Ras Georgis was then brought before the council, and scarcely denied the fact; upon which his only son was ordered to be hewn to pieces before his face, and immediately after the father's eyes were pulled out. Kutcho, keeper of the palace, and the Mahometan who gave the poison, were hewn to pieces with swords before the gate of the palace, and their mangled bodies thrown to the dogs. The king died that evening in great agony.

THE king's favourite, Betwudet Georgis, found himself now in a most dangerous situation. David his protector was dead, and he was left now alone to answer for those bloody measures of which he was universally believed to be the adviser. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, if possible, to secure a successor of David's own family, who
might

might stop the prosecutions against him for steps the king had adopted as his own, and as such had carried into execution.

WE have already observed, that, when banished to the mountain of Wechné by Oufas, he had contracted there, first a friendship with David, and, at the same time, with another prince, Ayto Welled Georgis, who was son to Yafous by Ozoro Mamet, whose sister Georgis had married, and consequently was uncle to Ayto Welleta Georgis, as having married his aunt, sister to Ozoro Mamet. When this prince now arrived at manhood, he knew himself perfectly secure; and, therefore, a number of the men in power being then assembled at his house, he lost no time, but surrounded it with a body of soldiers. He proposed to them Welled Georgis as immediate successor to David. The people present, seeing themselves in the soldiers hands, and convinced from the recent examples, that Georgis was not very tender in the use of them, in appearance cheerfully, and without hesitation, approved of the Betwudet's choice; and Lika Jonathan, one of the chief civil judges, performed the office of crier, proclaiming with an audible voice, "Ayto Welled Georgis, brother to our late king David, son of our great king Yafous, he is now our king. Mourn for the king that is dead, but rejoice with the king that is alive." This is the ordinary stile of the proclamation. Mutual congratulations and promises passed among the members of the meeting, but with very different resolutions.

ALL the company, escorted by a body of archers, and another of fuzileers, with Betwudet Georgis at their head, repaired to the great place before the palace to make the
same

same proclamation by beat of drum that they had done in the Betwudet's house. They found the drum ready, and the whole body of the king's household troops under arms, and drawn up before it. Upon the sight of their companions, the soldiers left the Betwudet, and fell into a proper place reserved vacant for them by their brethren. Without loss of time the drum was beat, and a proclamation made, "Bacuffa, son of Yafous, is our king! Mourn for the dead, and rejoice with the living." Loud acclamations from the people were echoed back again by the soldiers, and Bacuffa's name was received with universal acclamations. Some of the principal people then went to the council-chamber, and sent proper officers, with a good body of troops, to escort the king from Wechné.

UPON their arrival they found the sentiments of the princes upon the election were widely different from those testified by the people. They all to a man declared their dissent from that election. They upbraided Bacuffa for his brutal manners; for his violent, unfociable, unrelenting temper, from the which, they said, they had the cruelest consequences to apprehend; and, indeed, it was not without great reason that they made these remonstrances; for Bacuffa, when he escaped from the mountain, fled for refuge among the Galla, and received there a very strong tincture of the savage manners of that nation, which neither those of Gondar nor the army could have an opportunity to judge of. Resolute, active, and politic, he was very well formed to hold the reins of government in unsettled times; but his temper of itself exceedingly suspicious, and the little regard he had for the life of man, made his whole reign (as it was feared) one continued tragedy. So that, notwith-

standing the goodness of his understanding, and many acts of wisdom and justice, he is considered as a bloody, merciless tyrant, and his memory regarded with the greatest detestation.

ON the first news of the insurrection of the princes on Wechné, Kafmati Amha Yafous, governor of Begemder, marched with his whole force and encamped under the mountain. He then received Bacuffa as king, having rescued him from the hands of his relations ; and, in order to obviate, as much as possible, any future trouble, he obliged the different branches of the royal family to a reconciliation with each other, making Bacuffa, on the one side, swear that he was not to remember nor revenge any injury or affront received upon the mountain ; and them on the mountain swear also, that they would forget all old disagreements, consider Bacuffa as their king, and not create him any trouble in his reign by escapes, or other rebellious practices.

As it was then night, Bacuffa staid in the house of Azage Assarat, and the next morning came to Serbraxos, whence he sent to the monks of Tedda to meet him there. From Tedda he proceeded to Gondar, where he was met by the Abuna and Itcheguè amidst the acclamations of a prodigious number of people.

BACUFFA.



B A C U F F A.

From 1719 to 1729.

Bloody Reign—Exterminates the Conspirators—Counterfeits Death—Becomes very popular.

HONEST men, who loved their country, saw the dangerous situation it was then in. Every day had produced instances of a growing indifference to that form of government which, from the earliest times, they had looked upon as sacred ; and upon every slight and unreasonable disgust a person of consequence thought he had met with, a party was immediately formed, and nothing less was agreed on than directly imbruing their hands in the blood of their sovereign.

A PRINCE was necessary who had qualities of mind proper to enable him to put a stop to these enormities before they involved the state in one scene of anarchy and ruin.

Bacuffa was thought to answer these expectations ; and, in the end, he was found to exceed them. Silent, secret, and unfathomable in his designs, surrounded by soldiers who were his own slaves, and by new men of his own creation, he removed those tyrants who opposed their sovereigns upon the smallest provocation. Conspiracy followed conspiracy, and rebellion rebellion ; but all were defeated, as soon as they had birth, by the superior activity and address of the king.

I HAVE said he was called Bacuffa by the Galla ; but, in compliance with the custom of Abyssinia, already mentioned, he had assumed still two other names, which were, Atzham Georgis, his name of baptism, and Adebar Segued, which means “reverenced by the towns or inhabited places of the country,” given him at his inauguration. As for that of Bacuffa, which meant the *inexorable*, it was the less dishonourable from having been given him by impartial strangers from their own observation while he was yet in private life ; his whole conduct afterwards shewed how justly,

THE king has near his person an officer who is meant to be his historiographer. He is also keeper of his seal, and is obliged to make a journal of the king’s actions, good or bad, without comment of his own upon them. This, when the king dies, or at least soon after, is delivered to the council, who read it over, and erase every thing false in it ; whilst they supply any material fact that may have been omitted, whether purposely or not. This would have been a very dangerous book to have been kept in Bacuffa’s time ; and, accordingly, no person chose ever to run that risk ; and the king’s particular behaviour afterwards had still the further

ther effect, that nobody would supply this deficiency after his death, a general belief prevailing in Abyssinia that he is alive to this day, and will appear again in all his terrors. It is owing to this circumstance that we have nothing complete of this king's reign; only a few anecdotes are preserved, some of them very odd ones. I shall only, for the present, choose such of those as lead me to the subject I have in hand.

BACUFFA was exceedingly fond of divinations, dreams, and prophecies, so are all the Abyssinians; but he imbibed an additional propensity to these, among the Pagans to whom he had fled. One day, when walking alone, he perceived a priest exceedingly attentive in observing the forms that little pieces of straw, cut to certain lengths, made upon a pool of water into which ran a small stream. From the combination of these in letters, or figures, as they chanced to fall, an answer is procured to the doubt proposed, which, if you believe these idlers, is perfectly infallible.

BACUFFA in disguise, dressed like a poor man, is said to have asked the priest after what he was inquiring. The priest answered, He was trying whether the king would have a son, and who should govern the kingdom after him. The king abode the investigation patiently; and the answer was, That he should have a son; but that a Welleta Georgis should govern the kingdom after him for thirty years, though that Welleta Georgis should be neither his son nor any descendant of his. Full of thought at this untoward prediction, he harboured it in his breast without communicating it to any one, and resolved to blast the hopes of every Welleta Georgis that should be so unfortunate as to stand within the possibility

possibility of reigning after him. Many innocent people of different parts disappeared from this unknown crime; and eleven princes on the mountain of Wechané, some say more, lost their lives for a name that is very common in Abyssinia, without one overt act of treason, or even a suspicion of what they were accused. A panic now struck all ranks of people, without terminating in any scheme of resistance; which sufficiently shewed that the king had succeeded in dissolving all confederacies among his subjects, and destroying radically that rebellious spirit which had operated so fatally in the last reigns.

It is a custom among the kings of Abyssinia, especially in intervals of peace, to disappear for a time, without any warning. Sometimes, indeed, one or two confidential servants, pretending to be busied in other affairs, attend at a distance, and keep their eye upon him, while, disguised in different manners, he goes like a stranger to those parts he intends to visit. In one of these private journeys, passing into Kuara, a province on the N. E. of Abyssinia, near the confines of Sennaar, Bacuffa happened, or counterfeited, to be seized by a fever, a common disease of that unwholesome country. He was then in a poor village belonging to servants of a man of distinction, whose house was on the top of the hill immediately above, in temperate and wholesome air. The hospitable landlord, upon the first hearing of the distress of a stranger, immediately removed him up to his house, where every attention that could be suggested by a charitable mind was bestowed upon his diseased guest, who presently recovered his former state of health, but not till the kind assistance and unwearied diligence of the beautiful daughter of the house

house had made the deepest impression upon him, and laid him under the greatest obligations.

THE family consisted of five young men in the flower of their youth, and one daughter, whose name was Berhan Magafs, *the Glory of Grace*, exceedingly beautiful, gentle, mild, and affable; of great understanding and prudence beyond her age; the darling, not only of her own family, but of all the neighbourhood.

BACUFFA recovering his health, returned speedily to the palace, which he entered privately at night, and appeared early next morning sitting in judgment, and hearing causes, which, with these princes, is the first public occupation of the day.

A MESSENGER, with guards and attendants, was immediately sent to Kuara, and Berhan Magafs hurried from her father's house, she knew not why, but her surprise was carried to the utmost, by being presented and married to the king, no reply, condition, or stipulation being suffered. She gained, however, and preserved his confidence as long as he lived: not that Bacuffa valued himself upon constancy to one wife, more than the rest of his predecessors had done. He had, indeed, many mistresses, but with these he observed a very singular rule; he never took to his bed any one woman whatever, the fair Berhan Magafs excepted, without her having been first so far intoxicated with wine or spirits as not to remember any thing that passed in conversation.

WHILE Bacuffa was on his concealed journey to Kuara, a very dangerous conspiracy was forming at Gondar, under the immediate conduct of Ozoro Wellela Raphael, the king's sister, a very ambitious woman, and of an unquiet, enterprising temper. Disgusted by her brother's refusal of a gift of some crown lands which were then vacant, and without any owners, she thought no vengeance adequate to the affront, but dethroning Bacuffa. With this view she engaged several men of power in her interest, and particularly the black servants of the palace who attend immediately upon the king's person, and were to seize upon, or destroy him, the moment he returned. This plot, in all its particulars, was conveyed to the king.

THERE was an old, abandoned house of king Yafous, at Bartcho, about a day's journey south of Gondar; it stands on a very extensive plain. The king intending, as he said, to repair, or rather clean and prepare this house for his immediate reception, ordered all the black slaves from Gondar thither for that purpose, together with some of their ring-leaders. Kasmati Waragna, in the mean time, was ordered to bring a thousand horsemen of his Galla Djawi. He arrived at Bartcho nearly at the same time with the black servants, who being unarmed, as suspecting nothing, and on foot, after a sharp reproof from the king, were all surrounded and cut to pieces by the hands of Waragna, and orders were immediately sent to Gondar to extirpate the remainder there; and this execution laid a foundation for a feud that endures to this day between the Galla troops and the black horse, who were then abolished, as the Galla have been since, though both were part of the king's household formerly, before David's or Bacuffa's time. As for Wellela Raphael, she

she was seized that same night, and was conveyed to Walkayt, to be confined there, with private instructions, however, to put her to death speedily, which were executed accordingly.

THE queen had a son within the year, whom the council named Yafous, after his grandfather, whose memory will ever be dear in Abyssinia ; and this again revived the old apprehensions that Wellela Georgis was to govern the country (as the prophet said) for thirty years. Tormented with this idea, rather than the havoc it had occasioned, he devised with himself a scheme which he thought would certainly detect this future usurper of his crown and dethroner of his child. But first he directed that the queen should be crowned, a ceremony that carries great consequences along with it when solemnized properly, as at that time she is made regent, or Iteghè, in all minorities that may happen afterwards.

AFTER he had created his wife Iteghè, Bacuffa pretended to be sick : several days passed without hopes of recovery ; but at last the news of the king's death were published in Gondar. The joy was so great, and so universal, that nobody attempted to conceal it. Every one found himself eased of a load of fear which had become insupportable. Several princes escaped from the mountain of Wechné to put themselves in the way of being chosen ; some were sent to by those great men who thought themselves capable of effecting the nomination, and a speedy day was appointed for the burial of the king's corpse, when Bacuffa appeared, in the ordinary seat of justice, early in the morning of that

day, with the Iteghè, and the infant Yafous, his son, sitting in a chair below him.

THERE was no occasion to accuse the guilty. The whole court, and all strangers attending there upon business, fled, and spread an universal terror through the whole streets of Gondar. All ranks of people were driven to despair, for all had rejoiced; and much less crimes had been before punished with death. What this sedition would have ended in, it is hard to know, had it not been for the immediate resolution of the king, who ordered a general pardon and amnesty to be proclaimed at the door of the palace.

THERE are two kettle-drums of a large size placed one on each side of the outer gate of the king's house. They are called the *lion* and the *lamb*. The lion is beat at the proclamations which regard war, attainders for conspiracies and rebellions, promotions to supreme commands, and such-like high matters. The lamb* is heard only on beneficent, pacific occasions, of gifts from the crown, of general amnesties, of private pardons, and reversals of penal ordinances. The whole town was in expectation of some sanguinary decree, when, to their utter surprise, they heard the voice of the lamb, a certain sign of peace and forgiveness; and speedily followed by a proclamation, forbidding people of all degrees to leave their houses, that the king's word was pledged for every one's security; and that all the principal men should

* This drum is of beaten silver; the Abyssinians say, that this metal alone is capable of conveying the sweet sound contained in a proclamation of peace. It was carried off by the rebels after the retreat of Seibraxos.

should immediately attend him within the palace, in a public place which is called the Ashoa, and that upon pain of rebellion.

THE king appeared cloathed all in white, being the habit of peace ; his head was bare, dressed, anointed, and perfumed, and his face uncovered. He thus advanced to the rail of the gallery, about 10 feet above the heads of the audience, and, in a very graceful, composed, but resolute manner, began a short oration to the people. “ He put them in mind “ of their wantonness in having made Oufas, a man not of “ the royal line of Solomon, king of Abyffinia ; of their having incited his brother, Tecla Haimanout, to assassinate “ their father Yafous ; that they had afterwards murdered “ Tecla Haimanout himself, one brother, and lately his “ other brother David, his own immediate predecessor: That “ he had taken due vengeance upon all the ringleaders of “ those crimes, as was the duty of his place, and, if much “ blood had been shed, it was because many enormities had “ been committed ; but that knowing now that order was “ established, and conspiracies extinguished among them, he “ had counterfeited death, to signify an end was put to Bacuffa and his bloody measures ; that he now was risen “ again, and appeared to them by the name of Atzham Georgis, son of Yafous the Great ; and ordered every man “ home to his house to rejoice at the accession of a new “ king, under whom they should have justice, and live “ without fear, as long as they respected the king that God “ had anointed over them.”

THIS speech was followed by the loudest acclamations, “ Long live Bacuffa ! Long live Atzham Georgis ! ” It was

well known that this king never failed in his word, or any way prevaricated in his promises. Every one, therefore, went home in as perfect peace as if war had never been among them; and Bacuffa's delicacy in this respect was seen a few days after; for Hannes his brother having been brought clandestinely from Wechnè by Kafmati Georgis, a nobleman of great consequence, they were both taken by the governor of Wechnè and sent in chains to the king. The ordinary process would have been to put them instantly to death, as being apprehended in the very highest act of treason; nor would this have alarmed any person whatever, or been thought an infraction of the king's late promise. Bacuffa, however, was of another mind. He sent the criminal judges, who ordinarily sit upon capital crimes, to meet the two prisoners in their way to Gondar, and carried them back to the foot of the mountain of Wechnè to have their crimes proved, and to be tried there out of his presence and influence, where they were both condemned, Hannes to have an arm cut off, Georgis to be sent to prison to the governor of Walkayt, with private orders to put him to death; both which sentences were executed, though Hannes so far recovered that he was king of Abyssinia in my time, notwithstanding this mutilation; but it was a direct violation of the laws of the land.

It is said that a discovery, which happened in the king's feigned illness, promoted this sudden revolution of manners. In one of his secret tours through Begemder, (after Tigre, the most powerful province in Abyssinia, and by much the most plentiful) being disguised like a poor man, dirty and fatigued with the length of the way and heat of the weather, he came to the house of a private person, not very rich,
indeed

indeed, but of noble manners and carriage, and who, by the justice and mildness of his behaviour and customs, had acquired a great degree of influence among his neighbours. The father was old and feeble, but the son in the vigour of his age, who was then standing in a large pool of water, at his father's door, washing his own cotton cloak, or wrapper, which is their upper garment; an occupation below no young man in Abyssinia.

BACUFFA, as overcome with heat, threw himself down under the shade of a tree, and, in a faint voice and foreign dialect, intreated the young man to wash his cloak likewise, after having finished his own. The young man consented most willingly; and, throwing by his own garment, fell to washing the stranger's with great diligence and attention. In the mean time, Bacuffa began questioning him about the king, and what his opinion was of him. The young man answered, he had never formed any. Bacuffa, however, still plied him with questions, while he continued washing the cloak, without giving him any answer at all; at last, being able to hold out no longer, he gathered Bacuffa's cloak in his arms, wet as it was, and threw it to him: "I thought, says he, when you prayed me to take your cloak, that I was doing a charitable action to some poor Galla fainting with fatigue, and perhaps with hunger; but, since I have had it in my hands, I have found you an instructor of kings and nobles, a leader of armies and maker of laws. Take your cloak, therefore, and wash it yourself, which is what Providence has ordained to be your business; it is a safer trade, and you will have less time to censure your superiors, which can never be a proper or useful occupation to a fellow like you."

THE king took his wet cloak, and the rebuke along with it, and, on his return, he sent for the man to Gondar, and raised him in a short time to the first offices in the state. He possessed his entire confidence ; and he deserved it. He was the only man to whom the king had confided his fears of the usurper Welleta Georgis. While Bacuffa was supposed to be ill, the queen and this officer only present, he mentioned, for the first time, some surprise that no such person as Welleta Georgis had appeared during so long and so many inquiries, and could not help dropping some words as if he doubted the truth of this prophecy.

BADJERUND WARAGNA, for that was the name of the king's friend, maintained modestly that it might be a temptation of the devil to mislead him to his destruction. He told the king, that, by his own account of it, this Welleta Georgis was to have no power over *him*, as he was only to appear in his son's time. He begged him, therefore, to lay aside all further thoughts of his prophecy, whilst he trusted his son's succession to God's mercy, and to the prayers, the charity, and prudence of the queen. The Itgehé all this time was lost in silence. She desired the king to repeat to her the whole circumstances of the prophecy, which he distinctly did. " I wish," says she laughing, " this Welleta Georgis may not be now nearer us than we imagine ; perhaps in the palace." " In the palace !" says the king, with great emotion. " I doubt so," says the queen ; " suppose it should be me your own wife ; for Welleta Georgis was the name given to me in baptism ; and your late coronation of me, should a minority happen in the person of your son, or even a grandson, undoubtedly leaves me regent of the kingdom

kingdom by your own intentions when you made me Iteghè.

WHETHER the king was convinced or not, is not known; but he, from this time, desisted from his persecution of Welleta Georgis; and this the queen often told me among several anecdotes of that singular reign. She was my great patroness while at Gondar, and from her I received constant protection in the most disastrous times. To the credit of the prophet, she continued regent full thirty years; till the folly and ambition of her own family gave her a master that put an end to all her influence, except what she enjoyed from exemplary piety, and the most extensive works of charity and mercy.

THE king died after a vigorous reign, and after having cut off the greatest part of the ancient nobility near Gondar, who were of age to have been concerned in the transactions of the last reigns. This has rendered his memory odious, though it is universally confessed he saved his country from an aristocratical or democratical usurpation; both equally unconstitutional, as they equally struck at the root of monarchy.

THE queen, with very great prudence, concealed the day of the king's death; nor did any one, after the last experiment, affect rashly to believe that his death was real. Thus all were upon their guard against another resurrection. In that interval, she called her brothers from Kuara, and strengthened her son's and her own government, by putting the principal offices of state into the hands of persons attached to her family, so that, though her son Yafous was an infant, no attempt was at that time made towards any resolution.

lution. Even after the king's death was known to be real, for many years afterwards there were people of credit at different times found, who said they had met him at sundry places alive; whether by instigation, for any particular purpose, or not, is difficult to say.



YASOUS II. OR, ADIAM SEGUED.

From 177 to 1755.

Rebellion in the beginning of this Reign—King addicted to hunting—To building, and the Arts of Peace—Attacks Sennaar—Loses his Army—Takes Samayat—Receives Baady King of Sennaar under his Protection.

BESIDES the queen, mother of Yasous, Bacuffa had several other wives and divers children by them; none of them, however, had any degree of interest, or many followers, owing to the very singular practice of Bacuffa, already mentioned, in not admitting to his bed, from the time of his coming to the crown, any women except the queen, mother of Yasous, without having first so far intoxicated them with liquor as to produce an oblivion of all that passed at the interview. Some say this arose from his own jealous ideas; but the most

most general opinion was, that it was a kind of covenant with the queen, by which she pardoned him this temporary alienation of his person, for this security, that he was to give her no rival in his confidence. Indeed, his own temper led him naturally to estrange himself from every intimate connection, that could pretend to any lawful share with him in government. And this had gone so far, that he sent his wife, favourite as she was, and his son Yafous, to the low, hot, and unwholesome province of Walkayt, the ordinary place to which state criminals were banished, in order that they might be under the eye of Ain Egzie, a confidential servant of his, and governor of that province. It is true this was done without any mark of disgust; and the queen returned immediately by his own command; but Yafous staid at Walkayt with Ain Egzie, till he was four years old, without the king his father having shewn any anxiety for his return.

THE queen's first care was to call her brothers to court. The eldest, Welled de l'Oul, had been a favourite of the late king, and occupied under him a very considerable post in the palace. Geta, her second brother, was a man of slow parts, but esteemed a good soldier; being covetous, he was not a favourite of the people, and less so of the king. The third was Eshètè, (pronounced in that country Shitti); he was amiable, liberal, affable and brave, but rather given to indolence and pleasure, which alone hindered him from being a good statesman and general. He was a kind friend to strangers, a good master, and placable enemy; stedfast to his promise, and on all occasions a lover of truth; a quality so very rare in Abyssinia, that it was said there had not been one in this respect like him since the time of Yafous

the Great. Notwithstanding this, Bacuffa liked him not, as being too great a favourite of the people, and, for that reason, never gave him any employment.

THE next brother was Eusebius, a very brave and skilful foldier, but rash, avaricious, passionate, and treacherous, and as great an enemy to truth as his brother Eshtë was a friend to it. Bacuffa, upon some slight complaint, had resolved to put him to death; and, though he was dissuaded from this, he could never be so far reconciled to him as ever to release him from prison. The fifth brother was Netcho, whom the desire of living at home, or, perhaps, a want of money to defray his expences at court, kept low and in obscurity all his life-time. Yet he was a tried, gallant, and skilful foldier; and in later years, when I was at Gondar, was often praised as such by Ras Michael, the best judge, because the greatest general of his time, though, by reason of Netcho's private life, and absence from court, he never charged him with any important commission. Another brother was dead; and had left a son called Mammo, a good horseman, the only quality, as far as I know, that he possessed to which could justly be annexed the epithet of Good.

Of these brothers, Geta and Netcho were alive in my time. Eshtë was dead, but had left two sons, Ayto Engedan and Ayto Aylo, who were among the most intimate of my friends, from my entering Ethiopia till my leaving it; both were brave and good, and endowed with excellent qualities. Engedan, without any allowance for his country, and want of education, was, I think, by very much, the most amiable and complete man that I have ever yet seen.

SANUDA, son of Welled de l'Oul, played a very considerable part in the revolution that happened in my time ; was of a figure more than ordinary graceful ; was brave, and did not want good dispositions ; but these were obscured by debauchery in wine and women, to which there were no bounds. Eusebius left two sons, both more worthless and profligate than himself, and both came to untimely ends : Guebra Mehedin, the eldest, was slain in a private quarrel at Lebec by a near relation, Kasmati Ayabdar, after having robbed my servants and plundered my baggage, in Foggora, near the village Dara ; and the second, Ayto Confu, was killed in rebellion at the battle of Serbraxos, among the Begemder horse, fighting against his sovereign.

MAMMO we shall find acting insignificant parts at times, never trusted, nor of consequence to any one. As for the queen herself, she was reputed the handsomest woman of her time. She was descended from Victor, eldest brother to Menas, and son of David, who died without coming to the crown. This daughter was married to Robel, governor of Tigre, whose mother was a Portuguese, and the queen inherited the colour of her European ancestors ; indeed was whiter than most Portuguese. She was very vain of this her descent ; had a warm attachment to the Catholic religion in her heart, as far as she could ever learn it ; nor did she value herself less upon her beauty, as we may judge by the several names she took at different times. The first was Iteghè Mantuab, or *the beautiful queen* ; the second was Berhan Magwafs, or *the glory of grace* ; though her christened name was Welleta Georgis, as we have already observed.

AFTER the death of her husband, Bacuffa, she is said to have descended to a variety of attachments of short duration. She married a man of quality, Kasmati Netcho of Kuara, by whom she had three daughters. The first was Ozoro Esther, of whom I shall often speak, being, next to her mother, the greatest friend I had in Abyssinia, and one who had the most frequent opportunities of being so. She was married, in very early life, to Kasmati Netcho of Tcherkin, a man of great personal qualities, and who had a very large territory, reaching down to the Pagan blacks, or Troglodytes, called Shangalla.

THIS marriage was of very short duration. Netcho left one son, Ayto Confu, my very great and firm, though young friend, who likewise inherited his father's fortune and virtues. She was afterwards married to Ayo Mariam Barea, (excepting Ras Michael) reputed the best general in Abyssinia, but who died before I came into the country. By him she had one son and a daughter, infants. Lastly, she was married to Ras Michael, by whom she had two sons, the favourites of Michael's old age. Rustic and cruel as that old tyrant was, bred up in blood, and delighting in it, she governed him despotically, from the day of her marriage, yet so prudently, as to excite the envy of no one, excepting the murderers of her husband Mariam Barea, who, luckily, were also the constitutional enemies of her country.

THE second daughter of the Iteghé was Ozoro Wellela Israel, the most beautiful woman in Abyssinia, with whom I had very little acquaintance, she being at constant war with Ras Michael. She had married a nobleman of the first consideration, to whom half of the large and rich province of Gojam

Gojam belonged, by whom she had Aylo, one of the largest men that I ever saw, the only particular remarkable in him.

THE third was Ozoro Altaf, married to Welled Hawaryat, Ras Michael's son, by whom she had three children, two sons and one daughter. One of them died of the small-pox soon after my arrival at Gondar, as did his father also; the other son and daughter happily recovered.

BACUFFA had provided sufficiently for the security of his provinces, by placing tried and veteran officers in his governments. Elias, indeed, was Ras and Betwudet at Gondar, and he was suspected of wishes contrary to his allegiance; but far before any, in the confidence of the late king, was Waragna Shalaka, that is, colonel of a regiment of Djawi Galla, with which he defended the provinces of Damot and Agow against his countrymen on the other side of the Nile; for he was a Galla of that nation himself, and his name was Usho, which signifies *a dog*. But it was more by his interest, which he preserved with those people, than by his arms, that he kept those barbarians from wasting that country.

THE reader will easily remember the first occasion of his coming to Gondar was when Bacuffa saw him washing his clothes in a pool of water; and from the reproof, and his behaviour to the king on that occasion, as well as the duty and implicit obedience he paid to his commands afterwards, he was called Waragna, by way of contradiction, that word signifying a sturdy rebel, or one that stands up in defiance of the king. That name became much more famous afterwards

wards in the person of his son, Waragna Fasil, to the very great detriment of the country in general.

THE first thing the queen did was to send Shalaka Waragna, and Billetana Gueta David, with a large body of Mahometan fusileers, Djawi and Toluma Galla, to guard the mountain of Wechné, where the males of the royal family were imprisoned, that no competitor might be released from thence. The next step was to marry Ozoro Welleta Tecla Haimanout to Ras Elias, to confirm him, if possible, in his much suspected allegiance. After which, the Ras, judges, and soldiers of the king's household, made this proclamation—"Bacuffa, king of kings, is dead! Yafous, king of kings, liveth! Mourn for those that are dead, and rejoice with those that are alive!" Orders were then given for burying Bacuffa with all magnificence possible.

THE first thing that seemed the beginning of trouble in the new regency, and likely to destroy the calm that had hitherto subsisted, was an information given by Azage Georgis against Tecla Saluce, a great officer at court. Georgis accused him before the king and council, that he had been heard to say that king Yafous was dangerously ill. Tecla Saluce absolutely denied this charge, and said it was an invention of his enemy Georgis, and challenged him to prove it. Evidence being called, he was convicted in the most direct and satisfactory manner; was therefore condemned to death, and hewn to pieces at the king's gate that same day by the common soldiers.

HERE is a species of treason without any overt act. The imagining the king's death, which seems much to resemble

ble the law of England, may be defended from the importance of the case, but scarcely from any principle of justice or reason.

It soon appeared that a conspiracy had been on foot; several great men fled from court, among these Johannes, who had the charge of the king's horses. But Shalaka Warragna and Billetana Gueta David, being sent immediately after him, this conspiracy was soon stifled, and the ringleaders dispersed, mostly into Amhara, where they were taken prisoners by Woodage governor of the province, and sent to the king. Johannes, finding it impossible to escape, took to one of those papyrus boats used in navigating the lake Tzana; and, being driven by the wind, landed in an island* belonging to the queen, where he was taken prisoner, with his wife and family, and delivered up, on condition that he should not be put to death.

KASMATI CAMBI, returning from Damot, fell accidentally upon Palambaras Masmari and several others, and brought them prisoners to Gondar. A council was thereupon held, and the conspirators put upon their trial. Palambaras Masmari, and Abou Barea who was one of the judges, were condemned to be hanged on the tree before the palace-gate. Johannes and the rest were committed to close prison, in the hands of the Betwudet.

It was thought a proper expedient to check these disorders, to hasten the coronation of the king, though very young.
The

The judges and all the officers being assembled in the presence-chamber, where the king sits on his throne, (for in the council-chamber he sits in a kind of cage, or close balcony) where no part of him is discovered, Sarach Masseri Mammo, whose office it was, stood up with the Kees Harzé, or king's almoner; when this last had anointed him with oil, Mammo placed the crown upon his head; upon which the whole assembly, his mother only excepted, fell down and paid him homage; and at his inauguration he took the name of Adiam Segued.

ON a separate throne, on his right hand, sat the queen-mother. She, too, was crowned, though not anointed; but the same homage was performed to her that had been done to the king, who sat on the throne with his head covered; nor did the Abuna interfere, nor was his attendance judged any part of the ceremony.

THE first seeds of discontent had been sown in Damot, where a party of rebels had attacked Kasmati Cambi in the night, cut most of his army to pieces, and obliged Shalaka Job to fly into Gojam, and then return in haste to Gondar.

THE king found no better remedy against this rebellion than to appoint Kasmati Waragna governor of Damot, and Sanuda guardian of Wechné, with orders to take with him a son of the late Oufas the usurper, and confine him with the king's sons upon that mountain. At the same time he appointed Ayo governor of Begemder; both these preferments being much to the satisfaction of the whole nation. Waragna, knowing the necessities of his province, marched from Gondar with what forces he could collect, and took

up his head-quarters at Samseen, where, on the very night after his arrival, he was set upon by Tensa Mammo at the head of the Agows. However unexpected this was, Waragna, a good foldier, was not to be taken by surprize. He knew the country, and had not a great opinion either of the force or courage of the enemy, or capacity of their general. Presenting, therefore, only one half of his troops, which could not be easily discovered in the dark, he sent Fit-Auraris Tamba to make a small compass, and fall upon their rear with the other half. Mammo's troops, thinking this to be a fresh and separate army, immediately took to flight, and were many of them slain, after leaving behind them their tents, baggage, and the greatest part of their fire-arms, which had been of very little service to them in the dark.

WARAGNA, who knew the consequence of his province was the riches of it, and the dependance the capital had upon it for constant supplies of provisions, was loath to pursue his victory farther, if any means could be fallen upon to bring about a pacification. To effect this, he dispatched messengers to his friends, the Galla, on the other side of the Nile, ordering them to be ready to pass the river on the day he should appoint, and to lay waste the country of the Agow with fire and sword. He then decamped with his army from Samseen, and marched to Sacala, and took up his head-quarters in St Michael's church, where he found the Agows in the utmost terror from apprehension of being over-run with barbarians. But he soon eased them of their fears by a proclamation, in which he told them plainly, that it was owing to the goodness of the country, and not any merit in the people, that the king's palace and capital was so plentifully supplied with provisions from thence;

that all his pursuit was peace, but that he was resolved to effect that end by every possible means ; therefore the time was now come that they were to make a resolution, and abide by it, to submit and behave peaceably as good citizens ought ; or, when his army of Galla joined him, he would extirpate them to the last man. In the mean time, he published an amnesty of all that had passed.

THE Agows knew well that they were in the hands of one who was no trifler, nor in his heart much their friend. They ran to him, ready to make that composition which he should raise from them for their past transgressions and his future protection. The tribute laid upon them, for both was moderate beyond all expectation, 2000 oxen for the king and queen, and 500 for himself ; upon which he left Sacala, and entered Goutto, a very fertile country, between Maitsha and the Agows, where he used the same moderation, and by these means quieted and reconciled his whole province.

NOTHING could have been more advantageous to the king's affairs than the prudent conduct of this wise officer, which left him at liberty to afford him his assistance ; for in the mean time a conspiracy was formed at Gondar, which had taken deep root, and had a powerful faction, Elias, late Ras and Betwudet, Tenfa Manimo, Guebra l'Oul, Matteos and Agnè, all principal men in Gondar, and possessed of great riches and dependencies throughout the whole kingdom.

ON the 8th of December 1734, being joined by their followers from without, they all rendezvoused upon the river

ver Kahha, below the town. After holding council in the king's house which is there, they resolved to proclaim one of the princes upon the mountain Wechné, named Hezekias, king. For this purpose, furnished with a kettle-drum, they marched in three divisions, by three different ways, to the palace, avowedly with an intention to force the gates and murder the king and queen. But Fit-Aurarís Ephraim, having intelligence of this tumult, first shut up and obstructed all the entrances to the king's house, then gave advice to Billetana Gæta, Welled de l'Oul, of the rebellion of Tenfa Mammo, their design to murder the king, and their having proclaimed Hezekias.

THESE immediately repaired to the king's house to take council together what was to be done, and to defend the place if it was necessary. The rebels were now drawn up, and were beating their kettle-drum to make their proclamation, "Hezekias was king!" while Shalaka Tchinscho, a young nobleman of great hopes, who commanded the troops in the court where was the outer gate, impatient to hear an usurper proclaimed in the very face of his sovereign, directed the outer-court gate to be opened, and, with two bodies of Galla, Djawi and Toluma, and several corps of lances, which compose the king's household, however inferior in number, he rushed upon the rebels so suddenly, that they were soon obliged to think of other occupation.

THE first that fell was Afalessi Lensa, who stood by the drum, and was slain by Shalaka Tchinscho with his own hand; his drum taken and sent to the king as the first fruits of the day. The soldiers, encouraged by the example of their leader, fell fiercely upon the rebels, dispersed and

broke through them wherever they saw the greatest number together; a great slaughter was made, and Tenfa Mammo, with difficulty, escaped. The victory indeed would have been complete, had not an accidental shot from a distance wounded Shalaka Tchinho mortally. His own people carried him within the gate of the palace, where he gloriously expired at the feet of his sovereign.

THE rebels, notwithstanding this check, increased every day in number and resolution, when the news arrived that Waragna had composed all the differences in Damot, Agow, and Goutto, and, at the head of a numerous army, was waiting the king's orders. This intelligence first had the effect to disconcert the rebels, who suddenly left the capital in their way to Wechnè.

THE king, now master of Gondar, ordered a proclamation to be made for all persons whatever holding fiefs of the crown, as also all others, to assemble before him on a short day, where the Itchegué and Abuna, holding the picture of our Saviour, with the crown of thorns *, up before the people, did administer to them a solemn oath, to live and die with the king and Iteghé; a feeble experiment, often tried by a weak government. The only consequence of this was present expence to the crown in a distribution of beef, honey, butter, wheat, and all kinds of provisions; after which each man returned to his house, ready to repeat the perjury ten times a day for the same emolument, and same sincerity.

MES-

* A relic of the most precious kind, believed to have come from Jerusalem, and been painted by St. Luke.

MESSENGERS were next dispatched to Kafmati Waragna, ordering him to come to Gondar with the greatest force he could raise. The same day Azage Kyrillos, whom the king had made governor of Wechné, and Azage Newaia Selassé, went to the mountain, pretending that king Yafous was dead, and that the choice of the principal members of government had fallen upon Hezekias, who thereupon was delivered to him, and saluted king; and, without losing time, they marched to Kahha, and encamped on that river below Gondar.

IN the mean while, the great men and officers of the court, and in particular those who had estates and houses in Gondar, began to consider the danger of the town at the so near approach of the rebels. Several districts, or streets, situated on eminences, by shutting up access to them, were made tenable posts, and, having filled them with good soldiers, they set about the defence of the town and annoying the enemy. Hezekias had removed to the house of Basba Arkillidas; and it was agreed to send their whole forces to see if they could succeed in forcing the king's house. But before this another stratagem was tried to alienate the minds of the people of Gondar from their sovereign. It was said that certain Roman Catholic priests had arrived at Gondar; that they were shut up privately in the palace with the king and queen; and, upon the Abuna and Itcheguè coming to Hezekias to ask him how he happened to be proclaimed king; without making to them some confession of his faith, (a question they put to all young or weak princes), Hezekias answered, It was because he had heard the Itcheguè, and the rest of the clergy, seemed to be careless about the true faith, by suffering Catholic priests to live with the king in

the palace. A great ferment immediately followed; all the monks, priests, and madmen that could be assembled, (and on these occasions they gather quickly), with the Itcheguè and Abuna at their heads, went to Dippabye, the open place before the palace, and pronounced the Iteghè, Yafous, and all their abettors, accursed and given up to burn with Dathan and Abiram.

For several days and nights attempts were made to set fire to, and break open the gate. But the loyalists charged them so vigorously upon all these occasions, especially Billetana Gueta Welled de l'Oul, and the walls of the palace were so exceedingly thick and strong, that little progress was made in proportion to the men these attempts cost daily. However, on that side of the palace called Adenaga, the rebels had lodged themselves so near as to set part of it on fire.

THE king's house in Gondar stands in the middle of a square court, which may be full an English mile in circumference. In the midst of it is a square tower, in which there are many noble apartments. A strong double wall surrounds it, and this is joined by a platform roof; loop-holes, and convenience, for discharging missile weapons, are disposed all around it. The whole tower and wall is built of stone and lime; but part of the tower being demolished and laid in ruins, and part of it let fall for want of repair, small apartments, or houses of one storey, have been built in different parts of the area, or square, according to the fancy of the prince then reigning, and these go now by the names of the ancient apartments in the palace, which are fallen down.

THESE houses are composed of the frail materials of the country, wood and clay, thatched with straw, though, in the inside, they are all magnificently lined, or furnished. They have likewise magnificent names, which we have mentioned already. These people, barbarous as they are, have always had a great taste for magnificence and expence. All around them was silver, gold, and brocade, before the Adelan war, in which they lost the commerce of that country, by losing their connection with India.

THE next night the soldiers of Elias made their lodgements so near the walls, that, with fiery arrows, they set one of these houses, called "Werk Sacala," within the square, in flames; but Welled de l'Oul, with the Toluma Galla, falling at that instant, surprised Elias's soldiers, not expecting such interruption, and put the greatest part of them to the sword, setting on fire the houses that were near the palace, till part was entirely burnt to the ground. The next night, an attempt was made upon the gate to blow it up with gunpowder; but, before it was completed, the two rebels employed in the work were shot dead from the wall, and their train miscarried.

ON the 25th of December they burned a new house in the town built by the king, called Riggobee Bet. These frequent fires had turned the minds of people in general very much against Hezekias the rebel. The night after, there was another great fire in the king's house; Zeffan Bet, and another large building, were destroyed by the rebels, as was the church of St Raphael. Gondar looked like a town that had been taken by an enemy, and battles were every day fought in the streets, with no decisive advantage to either

party. Some part of the town was on fire every night ; nobody knew for what reason, nor what was the quarter that was next to be burnt.

IN the mean time, Azage Georgis arrived in the country of the Agows at Basil Bet, where Waragna was, and delivered him the king's order, that he should make all possible haste to his assistance at Gondar, with as large an army as he could suddenly bring ; and these dispatches conferred upon him at the same time, as a mark of favour, the post of Ibaba Azage, or governor of Ibaba, together with Elmana and Denfa, two districts inhabited by Galla, subjects to the king, which posts were then held by Tenfa Mammo, and forfeited by his rebellion.

THE next morning Waragna left his head-quarters at Basil Bet ; thence he marched to Gumbali, and thence to Sima. At Sima he heard, that, the day before, it had been proclaimed at Ibaba, by orders of Tenfa Mammo, that Yafous was dead, and Hezekias was now king ; upon this intelligence he marched from Sima, and, while it was yet early in the day, he came to Ibaba.

THE first inquiry was concerning the Shum (or chief of the town) left there by Tenfa Mammo ; and this man, coming readily to him to receive his commands, and offer him any service in his power, was asked by whose orders the proclamation of Hezekias was made ? Being answered, by Tenfa Mammo's, he directed the Shum and his two sons to be hanged on three separate trees in the middle of the town ; the Shum with the nagareet round his neck which had served in the proclamation of Hezekias ; he then declared

clared Tenfa Mammo a rebel and outlaw, and confiscated his estate to the king's use.

AT Ibaba he met Fit-Auraris Tamba, with a large body of Damots and Djawi; then he decamped from Ibaba, and, at the bridge over the Nile, was met by Azage Georgis, with all Maitsha, Elmana, and Denfa following, and thence proceeded to Waira, where he set Arkillidas at liberty. This officer, after distinguishing himself before all others in the king's defence, had been taken prisoner by Tenfa Mammo, and sent thither. Advancing into Foggora, with a large army, he halted at Gilda, and sent some soldiers on the road to Gondar, to see if he could apprehend any travellers, especially those going or coming to or from market. But, after three days waiting on the road, the soldiers returned without any person or intelligence, by which he judged the town was already in great straits. In two days after, he advanced to Wainarab, and thence he sent his Fit-Auraris forward to set a house at Tedda on fire, to shew to the king at Gondar that he was thus far advanced to his assistance. This barbarous custom of burning a house wherever an army encamps, though but for an hour, is invariably practised, as a signal by armies, throughout all Abyssinia.

AT this time there was a treaty begun between the king and Tenfa Mammo. The rebels, weary of the little advantage they had gained, and hearing Waragna was about to march against them, offered the queen her own terms, provided she published a general amnesty, and that each man should be allowed to keep the posts he had before the rebellion. The queen, weary and terrified with war, readily agreed to this proposal; and this facility, instead of accelerating

ting the treaty, gave the rebels an opportunity of asking further terms, and a settlement was spoken of for the king Hezekias, in some of the low provinces near Wal-kayt.

WELLED DE L'OUL, the queen's brother, a man in whom the rebels had trust, seconded his sister's desire, and carried on the treaty, but from different motives ; it was his opinion, that, to make peace with the rebels, leaving their party unbroken, was to spread the infection of rebellion all over the kingdom ; and to let them keep their posts, was leaving a sword in their hands to enable them to defend themselves on any future occasion. He therefore thought, that, as the king had Waragna now at his command, they should make use of him to pluck up this rebellion by the roots, cut off all the ringleaders, and disperse the faction ; but, in the mean time, in order to be able to effect this, they should keep up the appearance of being anxious for agreeing, in order to lull the enemy asleep, till Waragna made his instructions and designs known to the king.

FROM Wainarab, Waragna sent a messenger to let the king and queen know of his arrival ; and with him came Arkillidas, that no doubt might remain of the truth of the message. This officer told the king, that Waragna should advance to Tedda, and offer the rebels battle there ; but if they retired (as he heard they intended) to Abra, he would follow them thither. He desired the king also to issue his orders to the several Shums to guard the roads, that as few of the ringleaders of the rebels might escape as possible.

HEZEKIAS, with his army, decamped, taking the road to Woggora; and Waragna, following him, came up with him at Fenter, on January 20th 1735. The rebels, inferior in number, though they did not wish an engagement at that time, were too high-minded to avoid it when offered. Both armies fought a long time with equal fortune; and though Waragna at the first onset had slain two men with his own hands, and taken two prisoners, the battle was supported with great firmness till the evening, when Waragna ordered all his Galla, the men of Maitsha, Elmana, and Densa, to leave their horses, and charge the enemy on foot. This confident step, unknown and unpractised by Galla before, had the desired effect. The Galla now fought desperately for life, not for victory, being deprived of their only means of saving themselves by flight.

MOST of the principal officers among the rebels being killed or wounded, their army at last was broken, and took to flight. Hezekias was surrounded and taken, fighting bravely; being first hurt in the leg, and then beat off his horse with a stone. The pursuit was presently stayed. Tensa Mammo escaped safely through Woggora, a disaffected province; and had now passed the Tacazzè, when he was taken by the men of Siré, and brought to the king for the reward that had been offered for his head by Waragna.

HEZEKIAS was brought to his trial before the king, nor did he presume to deny his guilt. He was therefore sentenced to die, and committed to close prison. Tensa Mammo was arraigned, and, although he confessed the treason, he pleaded the peace he had made with the king before

the arrival of Waragna at Gondar. This plea was unanimously over-ruled by the judges, because the treaty had not been completed. He was, therefore, sentenced to die, and immediately carried out to the daroo-tree before the palace, and hanged between two of his most confidential counsellors.

THE Abuna and Itcheguè were next ordered to appear, and answer for the crime of high treason in excommunicating the king; they declared they proceeded on no other grounds than an information, that the king and queen were turned Franks, and had two Catholic priests with them in the palace. The men complained of were produced, and proved to be two Greeks; Petros, a native of Rhodes, and Demetrius. This explanation being given, the Abuna and Itcheguè thereupon asked pardon of the king and queen, and were ordered to make their recantation at Dippabye, which they immediately did, declaring they were wrong, and had proceeded on false information.

It was on the 28th of January that Sanuda and Adero were ordered to carry king Hezekias to Wechnè, which they did, and left him there without disfiguring him in any part of his body, as is the cruel, but usual custom in such cases. But both the Iteghè and her son were of the most merciful disposition; and the general reputation they had for this was often the cause of tumults and rebellions that would not have had birth in severer reigns.

It was not long after this when there appeared a pretender to the crown, very little expected. He said he was the old king Bacuffa; that he had given it out that he was dead,

dead, for political reasons, and was come again to claim his crown and kingdom. Never was resurrection so little wished for as this ; a violent fear fell upon part of the multitude for some time ; but his name making no party, whether true or false, he was seized upon without bloodshed, tried, and condemned to die. This punishment was changed into one of a *supposed* gentler kind, the cutting off his leg, and sending him to Wechnè. The operation, always performed in the grossest manner by an ax, high up the leg, and near the knee, is generally fatal ; for there is no one, having either skill or care, to take up the ends of the veins and arteries separated by the amputation ; they only apply useless fliptics and bandages, of no effect, till the patient bleeds to death. This is the common case, so that the pretended Bacuffa died, in consequence of the operation, before he came to Wechné, though he was by his sentence reprieved from death.

THE king, now arrived at the seventh year of his reign, proclaimed a general hunt, which is a declaration of his near approach to manhood ; but he pursued it no length, and again returned to Gondar.

AT that time, a great party of the queen's relations was made against Ayo governor of Begemder. It began by a competition between Kafmati Geta the queen's brother, and Ayo, who should have that province. The common voice was for Ayo, not only as a man of the greatest interest in the province, but in all respects unexceptionable throughout the kingdom. Welled de l'Oul, (brother to Geta) however, being now Ras and Betwudet, Geta governor of Samen, Eusebius, and all the rest of them in high places at court,

court, Geta was preferred to the government of Begemder. Ayo, though avowedly a good subject of the king, was determined not to be made a sacrifice to a party. He therefore refused to resign his government, and prepared to defend himself.

UPON this, Adero, governor of Gojam, with the whole forces of that province, passed the Nile, and entered Begemder; Geta on the side of Samen, and last of all Welled de l'Oul marched with a royal army to join the forces that had already begun to lay waste the country, where unusual excesses were committed. Ayo's house was burned to the ground, so were all those of his party, and their lands destroyed, greatly to the general damage of the province and capital. Ayo was now obliged to save himself by flight. It was said, that the king (though his army was ready) refused to march against Ayo; but with a party of his own set out for Aden, on the frontiers of Sennaar, to hunt there; nor did he return till the executions were over in Begemder.

ADERO fell back to Gojam, and Welled de l'Oul to Gondar soon after. The king himself appeared very much contented with his own expedition, in which he had shown great dexterity and bravery, having killed two young elephants, and a gomari, or hippopotamus, with his own hands. Nor did he stay any time at Gondar, or make any preferments, the usual consequences of victories, but prepared again for another hunting-expedition, or an attack upon the Shangalla. The queen and Welled de l'Oul opposed strongly his resolution. But Yafous seemed to be weary of being governed. He was fast advancing to manhood, and
of

of a disposition rather forward for his age. His expedition against the Shangalla was attended with no accident; and he returned to Gondar on the 3d of June, with a number of slaves, much better pleased that he had neglected, rather than taken, his mother's advice.

It was on the 23d day of December that Yafous again set out on another hunting-party, and killed two elephants and a rhinoceros. He then proceeded to Tchelga, and from Tchelga to Waldubba; thence he went to the rivers Gandova and Shimfa. These are two rivers we shall have occasion frequently to speak of in our return through Sennaar, in which kingdom the one is called Dender, the other Rabad. Here he exercised himself at a very violent species of hunting, that of forcing the gieratacachin, which means long-tail; it is otherwise called giraffa in Arabic. It is the tallest of beasts; I never saw it dead, nor, I think, more than twice alive, and then at a distance. It is, however, often killed by the elephant-hunters. Its skin is beautifully variegated when young, but turns brown when arrived at any age. It is, I apprehend, the camelopardalis, and is the only animal, they say, that, in swiftness, will beat a horse in the fair field.

It was not with a view to hunt only, that Yafous made these frequent excursions towards the frontiers of Sennaar. His resolution was formed (as it appeared soon after) in imitation of his forefather Socinios, to revive his right over the country of the *Shepherds*, his ancient vassals, who, since the accession of strength by uniting with the Arabs, had forgot their ancient tribute and subjection, as we have already observed.

THE king in five days marching from Gidara came to a station of the Daveina, which is a tribe of shepherds, by much the strongest of any in Atbara. He fell into their encampments a little before the dawn of day. The first shew they made was that of resistance, till they had got their horses and camels saddled; they then all fled, after the king had killed three of them with his own hand. Ras Woodage signalized himself likewise by having slain the same number with the king. The cattle, women, and provisions fell all into the king's hand, and were driven off to Gondar. Their arrival gave the town an entertainment to which they had a long time been strangers. Many thousand camels were assembled in the plain, where stands the palace of Kahha, (upon a river of that name) large flocks of horned cattle, of extraordinary beauty, were also brought from Atbara, which the king ordered to be distributed among his soldiers, and the priests of Gondar, and such of the officers of state as had been necessarily detained on account of the police, and had not followed the army.

This year, 1736, there happened a total eclipse of the sun which very much affected the minds of the weaker sort of people. The dreamers and the prophets were everywhere let loose, full of the lying spirit which possessed them, to foretel that the death of the king, and the downfall of his government were at hand, and deluges of civil blood were then speedily to be spilt both in the capital and provinces. There was not, indeed, at the time any circumstance that warranted such a prediction, or any thing likely to be more fatal to the state, than the expediture of the large sums of money that the turn the king had taken subjected him to.

HE had built a large and very costly church at Koscam, and he was still engaged in a more expensive work in the building of a palace at Gondar. He was also rebuilding his house at Riggobee-ber, (the north end of the town) which had been demolished by the rebels ; and had begun a very large and expensive villa at Azazo, with extensive groves, or gardens, planted thick with orange and lemon trees, upon the banks of a beautiful and clear river which divides the palace from the church of Tecla Haimanout, a large edifice which, some time before, he had also built and endowed. Besides all these occupations, he was deeply engaged in ornamenting his palace at Gondar. A rebellion, massacre, or some such misfortune, had happened among the Christians of Smyrna ; who, coming to Cairo, and finding that city in a still less peaceable state than the one which they had left, they repaired to Jidda in their way to India ; but missing the monsoon, and being destitute of money and necessaries, they crossed over the Red Sea for Masuah, and came to Gondar. There were twelve of them silver-smiths, very excellent in that fine work called filligrane, who were all received very readily by the king, liberally furnished both with necessaries and luxuries, and employed in his palace as their own taste directed them.

By the hands of these, and several Abyssinians whom they had taught, sons of Greek artists whose fathers were dead, he finished his presence-chamber in a manner truly admirable. The skirting, which in our country is generally of wood, was finished with ivory four feet from the ground. Over this were three rows of mirrors from Venice, all joined together, and fixed in frames of copper, or cornices gilt with gold. The roof, in gaiety and taste, corresponded per-

fectly with the magnificent finishing of the room ; it was the work of the Falasha, and consisted of painted cane, split and disposed in Mosaic figures, which produces a gayer effect than it is possible to conceive. This chamber, indeed, was never perfectly finished, from a want of mirrors. The king died ; taste decayed ; the artists were neglected, or employed themselves in ornamenting saddles, bridles, swords, and other military ornaments, for which they were very ill paid ; part of the mirrors fell down ; part remained till my time ; and I was present when the last of them were destroyed, on a particular occasion, after the battle of Serbraxos, as will be hereafter mentioned.

THE king had begun another chamber of equal expence, consisting of plates of ivory, with stars of all colours stained in each plate at proper distances. This, too, was going to ruin ; little had been done in it but the alcove in which he sat, and little of it was seen, as the throne and person of the king concealed it.

YASOUS was charmed with this multiplicity of works and workmen. He gave up himself to it entirely ; he even wrought with his own hand, and rejoiced at seeing the facility with which, by the use of a compass and a few straight lines, he could produce the figure of a star equally exact with any of his Greeks. Bounty followed bounty. The best villages, and those near the town, were given in property to the Greeks that they might recreate themselves, but at a distance, always liable to his call, and with as little loss of time as possible. He now renounced his favourite hunting-matches and incursions upon the Shangalla and Shepherds of Atbara.

THE extraordinary manner in which the king employed his time soon made him the object of public censure. Pasquinades began to be circulated throughout the capital; one in particular, a large roll of parchment, intituled, "The expeditions of *Yasous the Little*." The king in reality was a man of short stature. The Ethiopic word Tannush, joined to the king's name Yasous el Tannush, applied both to his stature and actions. So Tallac, the name given to another Yasous, his predecessor, signified great in capacity and atchievement, as well as that he was of a large and masculine person.

THESE expeditions, though enumerated in a large sheet of parchment, were confined to a very few miles; from Gondar to Kahha, from Kahha to Koscam, from Koscam, to Azazo, from Azazo to Gondar, from Gondar to Koscam, from Koscam to Azazo, and so on. It was a similar piece of ridicule upon his father Philip, as we are informed, that, in the last century, cost Don Carlos, prince of Spain, his life.

THIS satire nettled Yasous exceedingly; and, to wipe off the imputation of inactivity and want of ambition, he prepared for an expedition against Sennaar. It was not, however, one of those inroads into Atbara upon the Arabs and Shepherds, whom the Funge had conquered and made tributary to them; but was a regular campaign with a royal army, aimed directly at the very vitals of the monarchy of Sennaar, the capital of the Funge, and at the conquest, or extirpation of those strangers entirely from Atbara.

WE have seen, in the course of our history, that these two kingdoms, Abyssinia and Funge, had been on very bad

terms during several of the last reigns ; and that personal affronts and flights had passed between the cotemporary princes themselves. Baady, son of L'Oul, who succeeded his father in the year 1733, had been distinguished by no exploits worthy of a king, but every day had been stained with acts of treachery and cruelty unworthy of a man. No intercourse had passed between Yafous and Baady during their respective reigns ; there was no war declared, nor peace established, nor any sort of treaty subsisting between them.

YASOUS, without any previous declaration, and without any provocation, at least as far as is known, raised a very numerous and formidable army, and gave the command of it to Ras Welled de l'Oul ; and Kasmati Waragna was appointed his Fit-Auraris. The king commanded a chosen body of troops, separate from the rest of the army, which was to act as a reserve, or as occasion should require, in the pitched battle. This he ardently wished for, and had figured to himself that he was to fight against Baady in person. Yafous, from the moment he entered the territory of Sennaar, gave his foldiers the accustomed licence he always had indulged them with, when marching through an enemy's country. He knew not, in these circumstances, what was meant by mercy ; all that had the breath of life was sacrificed by the sword, and the fire consumed the rest.

AN universal terror spread around him down to the heart of Atbara. The Shepherds and Arabs, as many as could fly, dispersed themselves in the woods, which, all the way from the frontiers of Abyssinia to the river Dender, are very thick, and in some places almost impenetrable. Some of the
Arabs,

Arabs, either from affection or fear, joined Yafous in his march ; among these was Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs ; others taking courage, gathered, and made a stand at the Dender, to try their fortune, and give their cattle time to pass the Nile, and then, if defeated, they were to follow them. Kasinati Waragna, (as Fit-Auraris) joined by the king, no sooner came up with these Arabs on the banks of the Dender, than he fell furiously upon them, broke and dispersed them with a considerable slaughter ; then leaving Ras Welled de l'Oul with the king, and the main body to encamp, taking advantage of the confusion the defeat of the Arabs had occasioned, he advanced by a forced march to the Nile, to take a view of the town of Sennaar.

BAADY had assembled a very large army on the other side of the river, and was preparing to march out of Sennaar ; but, terrified at the king's approach, the defeat of the Arabs, and the velocity with which the Abyssinians advanced, he was about to change his resolution, abandon Sennaar, and retire north into Atbara.

THERE is a small kingdom, or principality, called Dar Fowr, all inhabited by negroes, far in the desert west of Sennaar, joining with two other petty negro states like itself ; still farther westward, called Selé and Bagirma, while to the eastward it joins with Kordofan, formerly a province of Dar Fowr, but conquered from it by the Funge.

HAMIS, prince of Dar Fowr, had been banished from his country in a late revolution occasioned by an unsuccessful war against Selé and Bagirma, and had fled to Sennaar, where he had been received kindly by Baady, and it was by
his.

his assistance the Funge had subdued Kordofan. This prince, a gallant soldier, could not brook to see the green standard of his prophet Mahomet flying before an army of Christians ; and, being informed of the king's march and separation from the main body nearly as soon as it happened, he proposed to Baady, that, as an allurement to Yafous to pass the river with only the troops he had with him, he should do from prudence what he resolved to do from fear, and fall back behind Sennaar, leaving it to Yafous to enter ; but, in the mean time, that, he should dispatch him with 4000 of his best horse, armed with coats of mail, to pass the Nile at a known place below, on the right of Welled de l'Oul, on whom he should fall by surprise, and, if lucky enough to defeat him, as was probable, he would then close upon Yafous's rear, which would of necessity either oblige him to surrender, or lose his life and army in attempting to repass the river between the two Nubian armies. This counsel, for many reasons was perfectly agreeable to Baady, who instantly fell back from covering Sennaar, and then detached Hamis to make a circuit out of sight, and cross the Nile as proposed.

IN the mean time, Yafous advanced to Basboch, where he found the current too rapid, and the river too deep for his infantry. He dispatched, therefore, a messenger to Welled de l'Oul for a reinforcement of horse, and gave his infantry orders to retire to the main body upon the arrival of the reinforcement of cavalry. This resolution he had taken upon advancing higher up the river from Basboch, till opposite to the town of Sennaar, and when divided only from it by the Nile. He there saw the confusion that reigned in that large town. No preparation for resistance being
1 visible,

visible, the cries of women at the sight of an enemy so near them, and the hurry of the men deserting their habitation loaded with the most valuable of their effects, all increased the king's impatience to put himself in possession of this capital of his enemy.

It happened that an Arab, belonging to Nile Wed Ageeb, had seen the manœuvre of Hamis and his cavalry. This man, crossing the Nile at the nearest ford, came and told his master, Wed Ageeb, what he had seen, who informed the king of his danger. Upon interrogating the Arab, it was found that the affair of Welled de l'Oul would certainly be over before the king could possibly join him; and in that case he must fall in the midst of a victorious army, and his destruction must then be inevitable, if he attempted it. It was, therefore, agreed, as the only means possible to save the king and that part of the army he had with him, to retreat in the route Shekh Nile should indicate to them, marching up with the river Nile close on their right hand, and leaving the desert between that and the Dender, which is absolutely without water, to cover their left. This was executed as soon as resolved.

In the mean time, Hamis had crossed the Nile, and continued his march with the utmost diligence, and, in the close of the evening, had fallen upon Welled de l'Oul as unexpectedly as he could have wished. The Abyssinians were everywhere slaughtered and trodden down before they could prepare themselves for the least resistance. All that could fly sheltered themselves in the woods: but this refuge was as certain death as the sword of the Funge; for, after leaving the river Dender, all the country behind them

was.

was perfectly destitute of water. Ras Welled de l'Oul, and some other principal officers, under the direction of some faithful Arabs, escaped, and, with much difficulty, two days after, joined the king.

BESIDES these, the army, consisting of 18,000 men, either perished by the sword, by thirst, or were taken prisoners; all the sacred reliques, which the Abyssinians carry about with their armies to ensure victory, and avert misfortune; the picture of the crown of thorns, called *sele quarat rasou*; pieces of the true cross; a crucifix that had on many occasions spoke, (which should ever after be dumb since it spoke not that day); all these treasures of priestcraft were taken by the Funge, and carried in triumph to Sennaar. Great part of those Arabs, who had joined the king in his march northward, had now quitted him and attached themselves to the pursuit of the fugitive remains of Welled de l'Oul's army. As these Arabs were those that lived nearest the Abyssinian frontier, and to whom the king had done no harm, because they had mostly joined him, no sooner was he informed of their treachery, but just arrived in their country, and scarcely out of danger from the pursuit of the Funge, Yafous turned short to the left, destroying with fire and sword all the families of those that had forsaken him, and so continued to do till arrived on the banks of the Tacazzé.

THE Arabs and Shepherds there, many of whom had just returned from the destruction of Welled de l'Oul's army at Sennaar, and were now rejoicing their families with the news of so complete a victory, and that all danger from the Christian army was over, were astonished to see Yafous at the head of a fresh and vigorous army, burning and destroying

stroying their country, and committing all sort of devaſtation, when they thought him long ago dead, or fugitive, and ſkulking half-famiſhed on the banks of the Dender.

THE king returned in this manner to Gondar, carrying more the appearance of a conqueror than one who had ſuffered the loſs of a whole army, his ſoldiers being loaded with the ſpoils of the Arabs, and multitudes of cattle driven before them. It was but too viſible, however, by the countenances of many, how wide a difference there was between the loſs and the acquiſition.

It was, indeed, not from the preſence or behaviour of the king, nor yet from his diſcourſe, that it could be learned any ſuch miſfortune had befallen him. On the contrary, he affected greater gaiety than uſual, when talking of the expedition; and ſaid publicly, and laughing, one day, as he aroſe from council, “ Let all thoſe who were not pleaſed with the ſong of Koſcam ſing that of Sennaar.” From this many were of opinion, that he enjoyed a kind of malevolent pleaſure from the miſfortune which had befallen his army, who, not content with ſeeing him cultivate and enjoy the arts of peace, had urged him to undertake a war of which there was no need, and for which there was no provocation given, though in it there was every ſort of danger to be expected.

ALTHOUGH Yaſous gave no conſolation to his people, the prieſts and fanatics ſoon endeavoured to prepare them one. Tenſa Mammo arrived from Sennaar with the crown of thorns, the true croſs, and all the reſt of that precious merchandiſe, ſafe and entire, only a little profaned by the bloody

hands of the Moors. Ras Welled de l'Oul's army, consisting of 18,000 of their fellow-citizens, was lying dead upon the Dender. It was no matter; they had got the speaking crucifix, but had paid 8000 ounces of gold for it. Still it was no matter; they had got the crown of thorns. The priests made processions from church to church, singing hallelujahs and songs of thanksgiving, when they should have been in sackcloth and ashes, upon their knees deprecating any further chastisement upon their pride, cruelty, and profaneness. All Gondar was drunk with joy; and Yafous himself was astonished to see them singing the song of Senaar much more willingly than that of Koscam.

At this time died Abuna Christodulus; and it was customary for the king to advance the money to defray the expence of bringing a successor. But Yafous's money was all gone to Venice for mirrors; and, to defray the expence of bringing a new Abuna, as well as of redeeming of the sacred reliques, he laid a small tax upon the churches, saying merrily, "that the Abuna and the crosses were to be maintained, and repaired by the public; but it was incumbent upon the church to purchase new ones when they were worn out."

THEODORUS, priest of Debra Selalo, Likianos of Azazo, and Georgis called Kipti, were consigned to the care of three Mahometan merchants and brokers at court, whose names were Hamet Ali, Abdulla, and Abdelcader, to go to Cairo and fetch a successor for Christodulus. They arrived at Hamazen on April 29th 1743, where the Mahometan guides chose rather to pass the winter-season than at Masuah, as at that place they were apprehensive they would suffer extortions
and

and ill-usage of every sort. We know not what came of Georgis Kipti ; but, as soon as the rainy season was over, Theodorus and Likianos came straight to Mafuah.

As soon as the Naybe got the whole convoy of priests and Mahometans into his hands, he demanded of them half of the money the king had given them to defray the expences of fetching the Abuna. He pretended also, that both Mahometans and Christians should have passed the rainy season at Mafuah. He declared that this was his perquisite, and that he had prepared great and exquisite provisions for them, which, being spoiled and become useless, it was but reasonable they should pay as if they had consumed them : till this was settled, he declared that none of them should embark or stir one step from Mafuah.

THE news of this detention soon arrived at Gondar ; and Yafous gave orders that Michael Suhul, governor of Tigrè, (afterwards Ras) and the Baharnagash, should with an army blockade Mafuah, so as to starve the Naybe into a more reasonable behaviour. But, before this could be executed, the Naybe had called the priests before him, and declared, if they did not surrender the money that instant, he would put them to death ; and, in place of giving them time to resolve, he gave them a very plain hint to obey, by ordering the executioner to strike off the heads of two criminals condemned for other crimes, after having brought them into their presence. The poor wretches, Theodorus and Likianos, did not resemble Portuguese, who would have braved these threats in the pursuit of martyrdom. The sight of blood was the most convincing of all arguments the Naybe could use. They gave up the money, leaving the division of it to his own dis-

cretion. He then hurried them on board a vessel, giving Michael and the Baharnagash notice that they were gone in safety, and that he had obeyed the king's orders in all respects. Michael was at that time in the strictest friendship with the Naybe, who was his principal instrument in collecting fire-arms in Arabia to strengthen him in the quarrel he was then meditating against his sovereign.

On the 8th of February 1744 the priests and their guides failed from Masuah; and they did not arrive at Jidda till the 14th of April. There they found that the ships for Cairo were gone, and that they had lost the monsoon; and, as no misfortune comes single, the Sherriffe of Mecca made a demand upon them for as much money as they had paid the Naybe; and, upon refusal, he put Abdelcader in prison, nor was he released for a twelvemonth after, when the money was sent from Abyssinia; and it was then agreed, that 75 ounces of gold* should in all future times be paid for leave of passage to those who went to Cairo to fetch the Abuna; and 90 ounces a-piece to the Sherriffe, and to the Naybe, for allowing him to pass when chosen, and furnishing him with necessaries during his stay in their respective government; and this is the agreement that subsists to this day.

In this interim, Likianos of Azazo, one of the priests, weary of the journey and of his religion, and having quarrelled with Abdulla, renounced the Christian faith, and embraced that of Mahomet; and Theodorus, Abdulla, and Hamet Ali, being the only three remaining, hired a vessel at Jidda to carry them to the port of Suez, the bottom of the
Arabic

* About one hundred and eighty-six pounds, an ounce of gold at a medium being 10 crowns.

Arabic Gulf. Before they had been a month at sea, Abdulla died, as did Hamet Ali seven days after they arrived at Suez. They had been on sea three months and six days from Jidda to that port, because they failed against the monsoon.

It was the 25th of June that Theodorus arrived at Cairo, delivered the king's present, the account of the Abuna's death, and the king's desire of having speedily a successor. The patriarch, having called together all his bishops, priests, and deacons, conferred the dignity on a monk of the Order of St Anthony, the only Order of monks the Coptic church acknowledges. These pass a very austere life in two convents in a dreary desert, never tasting flesh, but living on olives, salt fardines*, wild herbs, and the worst of vegetables. Yet so attached are they to this solitude, that, when they are called to be ordained to this prelature of Abyssinia, a warrant from the basha, and a party of Turks, is necessary to bring this elect one to Cairo in chains, where he is kept in prison till he is ordained; guarded afterwards, and then forced on board a vessel which carries him to Abyssinia, whence he is certain never to return.

THE Abuna departed from Suez the 20th of September; the beginning of November he arrived at Jidda; in February 1745 he failed from Jidda, taking with him Abdelcader, now freed from prison; he arrived at Masuah the 7th of March, and immediately sent an express to notify his arrival to the king and queen, and to Ras Welled de l'Oul. Congratulations

* This is a fish common in the Mediterranean, of the kind of anchovies, the common food of the galley-slaves, and lower sort of people.

gratulations upon the event were returned from each of them ; they requested he would immediately come to court ; but this the Naybe refused to permit, till he had first received his dues ; and Yafous seemed inclined to pay no more for him than what he had cost already.

THE priests, and devout people in Tigré, were very desirous to free the Abuna from his confinement in Mafuah. They saw that the king was not inclined to advance money, and all of them knew perfectly, that, whatever face he put upon the matter, the Ras would not give an ounce of gold to prevent the Abuna from staying there all his life. In this exigency they applied to Janni, a Greek, living at Adowa, (of whom I shall hereafter speak), a confidential servant and favourite of Michael, and also well acquainted at Mafuah, to see if he could get him released by stratagem. Janni concerted the affair with the monks' of the monastery of Bizan, two of whom conducted the Abuna by night out of the island of Mafuah, and landed him safely in their monastery in the wilderness, with the *myron*, or consecrated oil, in one hand, and his missal, or liturgy, in the other. So far the escape was complete ; but unluckily no orders had been given for Theodorus, who accordingly remained behind at Mafuah.

THE Naybe, exasperated at the Abuna's flight, wrecked his vengeance on poor Theodorus ; he put him in irons, and threw him into close prison, where he remained for two months. There was no remedy but paying 80 ounces of gold to the Naybe for his release ; he might else have remained there for ever.

THE king, not a little surpris'd at these frequent influences on the part of the Naybe, began to inquire what could be the reason; for he perfectly knew, not only Suhul Michael, the governor of Tigrè, but even the Baharnagash, could reduce Mafuah to nothing with their little finger; and he was informed, that a strong friendship subsisted between the Naybe and Suhul Michael, and that it was by relying on his friendship that the Naybe ventured to treat the king's servants, at different times, in the manner he had done.

YASOUS, desirous to verify this himself, and to dissolve the bands of so unnatural a friendship, marched into Tigrè with a considerable army. Passing by Adowa, the residence of Suhul Michael, he was pleas'd with the warlike appearance of this his seat of government, and the perfect order and subordination that reigned there. Certain disorders and tumults were said to prevail in the neighbouring province of Enderta where Kafmati Woldo commanded. The savage people, called Azabo, living at Azab; the low country below Enderta and the Dobas, (a nation of *Shepherds* near them, still more savage, if possible, than them) had laid waste the districts that were next to their frontier, burning the churches, and slaying the priests in the daily inroads which they made into Abyssinia. All these things, bad enough indeed, were at this time aggravated, as was thought, for two reasons; the first was to cast an odium upon Kafmati Woldo, Michael's great enemy, as incapable of governing his province; the second, to prevent the king in his progress to Mafuah, as he openly profess'd his fixed intention was to punish the Naybe with the utmost severity.

THE protection of his subjects, therefore, from the savages, was represented to the king as the most pressing service ; and, marching with his usual diligence straight to Enderta, he was met there by Kasmati Woldo, an old experienced officer, who aiming at no preferment, paying his tribute punctually, and having been constantly occupied in repelling the incursions of the Pagans on the frontier, had not been at court since the reign of Theophilus.

AFTER receiving the necessary information about the country he intended to enter, and taking Kasmati Woldo's two sons with him, the king descended into the low country of Dancali, once a petty Mahometan kingdom, and friendly to Abyssinia, now a mixture of Galla and the natives called Taltal. Without delay he pushed on to Azab, spreading desolation through that little province, always desert enough from its nature, though formerly, from its trade, one of the richest spots in the world.

THE king then turned to the right upon the Dobas, who, not expecting an army of that strength, fled and left their whole cattle a prey to Yafous and his foldiers ; a greater number was scarce ever seen in Abyssinia. The king now returned to Enderta, where he confirmed Kasmati Woldo in his government with distinguished marks of favour ; and he this year again came back victorious to Gondar, leaving his campaign against the Naybe for another season.

IN passing by Adowa, a fray happened among the king's troops and those of Michael ; several were killed on both sides ; and, as the dispute was between Tigre and Amhara, the two great divisions of the country, it threatened to create

a party-quarrel between the foldiers of one divifion and thofe of the other. No notice was taken of this when Yafous marched eastward; but, on his return, Michael begged the king to interfere, and make peace between the two parties. To this Yafous answered, That he did not think it worth his while, for they would make peace themfelves when they were tired of quarrelling.

WHETHER this was the motive of fending for Michael to Gondar, or whether it was the ftory of the Naybe, or what elfe was the king's motive, we do not know; but, fo foon as he was arrived in the capital, he fent Kafmati Ephraim, and Shalaka Keffa, into Tigré, commanding Michael's attendance at Gondar. This Michael abfolutely refufed; he pretended Kafmati Woldo had efranged the king's affection from him, and that Yafous had called him to Gondar now to put him to death, upon a preteñce of his foldiers quarrel with the king's troops. This refufal was repeated to Yafous, without any palliation whatever; and he instantly marched from Gondar, and encamped upon the river Waar, where he was reinforced a few days afterwards by Ras Welled de l'Oul, whole intention was to perfuade Michael to fubmiffion; for he had been advifed not to truft the king's oath of forgiveness unlefs he had likewise that of Welled de l'Oul.

THE king's readinefs difconcerted Suhul Michael. Tho' well armed and appointed himfelf, as alfo an excellent general, he did not risk the prefenting himfelf againft the king on a plain; for Yafous was much beloved by the foldiers, and always very kind and liberal to them.

THE mountain Samayat, though not the most inaccessible in Tigrè, was a place of great consequence and strength, when possessed by an army and officer such as Michael. To this natural fortress he carried all his valuable effects, occupied and obstructed all the avenues to it, and resolved there to abide his fortune. The king, with his army, sat down at the foot of the mountain; and, encircling it with troops, he ordered it to be assaulted on four sides at once; on one, by Kasmati Ayo, governor of Begemder; on the second, by Kasmati Waragna; the third, by Kasmati Woldo; and the fourth, by Ras Welled de l'Oul. The king himself went round about to every place, giving his orders, encouraging his men, and fighting himself in the foremost ranks like a common soldier. The mountain was at length carried, with much bloodshed on both sides, and Michael was beat from every part of it but one, which, though not strong enough to hold out against the king's army, if well defended could not be carried without great loss of men.

HERE Michael desired to capitulate. But, before he left the mountain and surrendered to the king, he desired that an officer of trust might be sent to him, because he had then upon the mountain a large collection of treasure, which he desired to keep for the king's use, otherwise it would be dissipated and lost in the hands of the common soldiers. The Ras sent two confidential officers, who took from the hands of Michael a prodigious sum of gold, the precise amount of which is not named. He then descended the mountain, carrying, as is the custom of the country for vanquished rebels, a stone upon his head, as confessing himself guilty of a capital crime. A violent storm of rain and wind prevented, for that day, his coming into the pre-

sence of the king ; and the devil, as the Abyssinians believe, began in that storm a correspondence with him which continued many years ; I myself have often heard him vaunt of his having maintained, ever since that time, an intercourse with St Michael the archangel.

ON the morning of the 27th of December, Ras Welled de l'Oul ordered Michael to attend him in the habit of a penitent ; and, followed by his companions in misfortune, (that part of his troops which was taken on the mountain) and surrounded by a number of soldiers, with drums beating and colours flying, he was carried into the king's presence.

RAS WELLED DE L'OUL had, with difficulty, engaged the king's promise that he was not to put him to death. The good genius of Yafous and his family was labouring by one last effort to save him. On seeing Michael upon the ground, Yafous fell into a violent transport of rage, spurned him with his foot, declaring he retracted his promise, and ordered him to be carried out, and put to death before the door of his tent. Ras Welled de l'Oul, Kafmati Waragna, Kafmati Woldo, and all the officers of consideration, either of the court or army, now fell with their faces upon the ground, crying to the king for mercy and forgiveness. Yafous, if in his heart he did not relent, still was obliged to pardon on such universal solicitation ; and this he did, after making the following observation, which soon after was looked on as a prophecy : " I have pardoned that traitor at your instance, because I at all times reward merit more willingly than I punish crimes ; but I call you all to witness, that I wash my hands before God to-day of all that innocent blood Michael shall

shed before he brings about the destruction of his country, which I know in his heart he has been long meditating."

I CANNOT help mentioning it as an extraordinary circumstance, that at the time I was at Gondar, in the very height of Suhul Michael's tyranny, a man quarrelled with another who was a scribe, and accused him before Michael of having recorded this speech of the king, as I have now stated it, in a history that he had written of Yafous's reign. The book was produced, the passage was found and read; and I certainly expected to have seen it torn to pieces, or hung upon a tree about the author's neck. On the contrary, all the Ras said was, "If what he writes is true, wherein is the man to blame?" And turning with a grin to Tecla Haimanout, one of the judges, he said, "Do you remember? I do believe Yafous did say so." The book was restored to the author, and no more said of the matter, not even an order was given to erase the passage. He had no objection to Yafous and to his whole race being prophets; he had only taken a resolution that they should not be kings.

A GENERAL silence followed this speech of Yafous, instead of the acclamations of joy usual in such cases. The king then ordered Ras Welled de l'Oul to lead the army on to Gondar, which he did with great pomp and military parade, while the king, who could not forget his forebodings, retired to an island, there to fast some days in consequence of a vow that he had made. This being finished, Yafous returned to Gondar; and, as he was now in perfect peace throughout his kingdom, he began again to decorate the apartments of his palace. A large number of mirrors had arrived at

this time, a present from the Naybe of Masuah, who, after what had happened to his friend Michael, began to feel a little uneasy about the fate of his island.

WHILE Yasous was thus employed, news were sent him from Kafmati Ayo, governor of Begemder, that he had beat the people of Lasta in a pitched battle in their own country, had forced their strong-holds, dispersed their troops, and received the general submission of the province, which had been in rebellion since the time of Hatzè Socinios, that is, above 100 years. Immediately after these news, came Ayo himself to parade and throw his *unclean* trophies of victory before the king, and brought with him many of the principal people of Lasta to take the oaths of allegiance to the king.

YASOUS received the accounts of the success with great pleasure, and still more so the oaths and submissions made to him. He then added Lasta to the province of Begemder, and clothed Ayo magnificently, as well as all those noblemen that came with him from Lasta. The end of this year was not marked with good fortune like the beginning. A plague of locusts fell upon the country, and consumed every green thing, so that a famine seemed to be inevitable, because, contrary to their custom, they had attached themselves chiefly to the grain. This plague is not so frequent in Abyssinia as the Jesuits have reported it to be. These good fathers indeed bring the locusts upon the country, that, by their pretended miracles, they may chase them away.

MICHAEL had continued some time in prison, in the custody of Ras Welled de l'Oul. But he was afterwards set at full

full liberty; and it was now the 17th year of Yafous's reign, when, on the 17th of September 1746, at a great promotion of officers of state, Michael, by the nomination of the king himself, was restored to his government of Tigrè; and, a few days after, he returned to that province. All his ancient friends and troops flocked to him as soon as he appeared, to welcome him upon an event looked upon by all as nearly miraculous. Nor did Michael discourage that idea himself, but gave it to be understood, among his most intimate friends, that a vision had assured him that he was thenceforward under the immediate protection of St Michael the archangel, with whom he was to consult on every emergency.

As soon as he had got a sufficient army together, the first thing he did was to attack Kafmati Woldo, without any provocation whatever; and, after beating him in two battles, he drove him from his province, and forced him to take refuge among the Galla, where, soon after, by employing small presents, he procured him to be murdered; the ordinary fate of those who seek protection among those faithless barbarians.

It will seem extraordinary that the king, who had such recent experience of both, the one distinguished for his duty, the other for his obstinate rebellion, should yet tamely suffer his old and faithful servant to fall before a man whom in his heart he so much mistrusted. But the truth is, all Michael's danger was past the moment he got free access to the king and queen, though he was deservedly esteemed to be the ablest soldier in Abyssinia of his time, he was infinitely more capable in intrigues, and private negotiations
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at court, than he was in the field, being a pleasant and agreeable speaker in common conversation; a powerful and copious orator at council; his language, whether Amharic or Tigrè, (but above all the latter) correct and elegant above any man's at court; steady to the measures he adopted, but often appearing to give them up easily, and without passion, when he saw, by the circumstances of the times, he could not prevail: though violent in the pursuit of riches, when in his own province, where he spared no means nor man to procure them, no sooner had he come to Gondar than he was lavish of his money to extreme; and indeed he set no value upon it farther than as it served to corrupt men to his ends.

WHEN he surrendered his treasure at the mountain Samayat, he is said to have divided it into several parcels with his own hand. The greatest share fell to the king, who thought he had got the whole; but the officers who received it, and saw different quantities destined for the Iteghé and Ras Welled de l'Oul, took care to convey them their share, for fear of making powerful enemies. Kasinati Waragna had his part; and even Kasinati Woldo, though Michael soon after plundered and slew him. All Gondar were his friends, because all that capital was bribed on this occasion. It was gold he only lent them, to resume it, (as he afterwards did) with great interest, at a proper time.

It still remained in the king's breast to wipe off his defeat at Sennaar, as he had, upon every other occasion, been victorious; and even in this, he still flattered himself he had not been beat in person. He set out again upon another expedition to Atbara; instead of coasting along the Dender;
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he descended along the Tacazzé into Atbara, where, finding no resistance among the Shepherds, he attached himself in particular to the tribe called Daveina, which, in the former expedition, had joined Welled de l'Oul's army. Upon the first news of his approach they had submitted ; but, notwithstanding all promises and pretences of peace, he fell upon them unawares, and almost extirpated the tribe.

SUHUL MICHAEL, while the king was thus occupied in the frontier of his province, did every thing that a faithful, active subject could do. He furnished him constantly with the best intelligence, supplied him with the provisions he wanted, and made, from time to time, strong detachments of troops to reinforce him, and to secure such posts as were most commodious and important in case of a retreat becoming necessary.

YASOUS, who had succeeded to his wish, was fully sensible of the value of such services, and sent, therefore, for Michael, commanding his attendance at Gondar. There was no fear, no hesitation now, as before in the affair of Samayat. He decamped upon the first notice, even before the rainy season was over, and arrived at Gondar on August 30th 1747, bringing with him plenty of gold ; few soldiers, indeed, but those picked men, and in better order, than the king had ever yet seen troops.

It was plain now to everybody, that nothing could stop Michael's growing fortune. He alone seemed not sensible of this. He was humbler and less assuming than before. Those whom he had first bribed he continued still to bribe, and added as many new friends to that list as he thought
could

could serve him. He pretended to no precedence or pre-eminence at court, not even such as was due to the rank of his place, but behaved as a stranger that had no fixed abode among them.

ONE day, dining with Kafmati Geta, the queen's brother, who was governor of Samen, and drinking out of a common-glass decanter called Brulhé, when it is the privilege and custom of the governor of Tigré to use a gold cup, being asked, Why he did not claim his privilege? he said, All the gold he had was in heaven, alluding to the name of the mountain Samayat, where his gold was surrendered, which word signifies Heaven. The king, who liked this kind of jests, of which Michael was full, on hearing this, sent him a gold cup, with a note written and placed within it, "Happy are they who place their riches in heaven;" which Michael directed immediately to be engraved by one of the Greeks upon the cup itself. What became of it I know not; I often wished to have found it out, and purchased it. I saw it the first day he dined, after coming from council, at his return from Tigré, after the execution of Abba Salama; but I never observed it at Serbraxos, nor since. I heard, indeed, a Greek say he had sent it by Ozoro Esther, as a present to a church of St Michael in Tigré.

ENDERTA was now given him in addition to the province of Tigré, and, soon after, Siré and all the provinces between the Tacazzé and the Red Sea; so he was now master of near half of Abyssinia.

THE rest of this king's reign was spent at home in his usual amusements and occupations. Several small expedi-

tions were made by his command, under Palambaras Selassé, and other officers, to harass the Shepherds, whom he conquered almost down to Suakem. His ravages, however, had been confined to the peninsula of Atbara, and had not ever passed to the eastward of the Tacazzé, but he had impoverished all that country. After this, by his orders, the Baharnagash, and other officers, entered that division called Derkin, between the Mareb and the Atbara, and, still further, between the Mareb and the mountains, in a part of it called Ajam. In this country Hassine Wed Ageeb was defeated by the Baharnagash with great slaughter; and the Shekh of Jibbel Musa, one of the most powerful of the Shepherds, was taken prisoner by Palambaras Selassé, without resistance, and carried, with his wife, his family, and cattle, in triumph to Gondar, where, having sworn allegiance to the king, he was kindly treated, and sent home with presents, and every thing that had been taken from him.

THIS year, being the 24th of Yafous's reign, he was taken ill, and died on the 21st day of June 1753, after a very short illness. As he was but a young man, and of a strong constitution, there was some suspicion he died by poison given him by the queen's relations, who were desirous to secure another minority rather than serve under a king, who, by every action, shewed he was no longer to be led or governed by any, but least of all by them.

Yafous was married very young to a lady of noble family in Amhara, by whom he had two sons, Adigo and Aylo. But their mother pretending to a share of her husband's government, and to introduce her friends at court, so hurt Welleta Georgis the Iteghé, or queen-regent, that she prevailed

vailed on the king to banish both the mother and sons to the mountain of Wechné.

IN order to prevent such interference for the future, the Iteghé took a step, the like of which had never before been attempted in Abyssinia. It was to bring a wife to Yafous from a race of Galla. Her name was Wobit, daughter of Amitzo, to whom Bacuffa had once fled when he escaped from the mountain before he was king, and had been kindly entertained there. Her family was of the tribe of Edjow, and the division of Toluma, that is, of the southern Galla upon the frontiers of Amhara. They were esteemed the politest, that is, the least barbarous of the name. But it was no matter, they were Galla, and that was enough. Between them and Abyssinia, oceans of blood had been shed, and strong prejudices imbibed against them, never to be effaced by marriages. She was, however, brought to Gondar, christened by the name of Bessabée, and married to Yafous : By her he had a son, named Joas, who succeeded his father.



J O A S.

From 1753 to 1768.

This Prince a Favourer of the Galla his Relations—Great Dissentions on bringing them to Court—War of Begemder—Ras Michael brought to Gondar—Defeats Ayo—Mariam Barea refuses to be accessory to his Death—King favours Waragna Fasil—Battle of Azazo—King Assassinated in his Palace.

UPON the first news of the death of king Yafous, the old officers and servants of the crown, remembering the tumults and confusion that happened in Gondar at his accession, repaired to the palace from their different governments, each with a small well-regulated body of troops, sufficient to keep order, and strengthen the hands of Ras Welled de l'Oul, whom they all looked upon as the father of his country. The first who arrived was Kasmati Waragna of Damot; then Ayo of Begemder, and very soon after, though at much the greatest distance, Suhul Michael, governor of Tigrè. These three entered the palace, with Welled

de l'Oul at their head, and received the young king Joas from the hands of the Iteghé his grandmother, and proclaimed him king, with the usual formalities, without any opposition or tumult whatever.

A NUMBER of promotions immediately followed; but it was observed with great discontent by many, that the Iteghé's family and relations were grown now so numerous, that they were sufficient to occupy all the great offices of state without the participation of any of the old families, which were the strength of the crown in former reigns; and that now no preferment was to be expected unless through some relation to the queen-mother.

WELLED HAWARAYAT, son to Michael governor of Tigré, had married Ozoro Altafsh, the queen's third daughter, almost a child; and long before that, Netcho of Tcherkin had married Ozoro Esther, likewise very young; and Ras Michael, old as he was, had made known his pretensions to Ozoro Welleta Israel, the queen's second daughter, immediately younger than Ozoro Esther. These proposals, from an old man, had been received with great contempt and derision by Welleta Israel, and she persevered so long in the derision of Michael's courtship, that it left strong impressions on the hard heart of that old warrior, which shewed themselves after in very disagreeable consequences to that lady all the time Michael was in power.

THE first that broke the peace of this new reign was Nanna Georgis, chief of one of the clans of Agows of Damot. Engaged in old feuds with the Galla on the other side of the Nile, the natural enemies of his country, he could
not

not see, but with great displeasure, a Galla such as Kasmati Waragna, however worthy, governor of Damot, and capable, therefore, of over-running the whole province in a moment, by calling his Pagan countrymen from the other side.

WARAGNA, though this was in his power, knew the measure was unpopular. Kasmati Eshtë was the queen's brother, and governor of Ibaba, a royal residence, which has a large territory and salary annexed to it. When, therefore, at council, he had complained of the injury done to him by Nanna Georgis, he refused the taking upon him the redressing these injuries, and punishing the Agows, unless Kasmati Eshtë was joined in the commission with him.

THE reason of this was, as I have often before observed, that, as the Agows are those that pay the greatest tribute in gold to the king, and furnish the capital with all sorts of provisions, any calamity happening in their country is severely felt by the inhabitants of Gondar; and the knowledge of this occasions a degree of presumption and confidence in the Agows, of which they have been very often the dupes. This, indeed, happened at this very instant. For Waragna and Eshtë marched from Gondar, and with them a number of veteran troops of the king's household of Maitsha, depending on Ibaba; and this army, without bringing one Galla from the other side of the Nile, gave Nanna Georgis and his Agows such an overthrow that his clan was nearly extirpated, and many of the principal of that nation slain.

NANNA GEORGIS, who chiefly was aimed at as the author of this revolt, escaped, with great difficulty, wounded, from the field; and the feud which had long subsisted between Waragna's family and the race of the Agows, received great addition that day, and came down to their posterity, as we shall soon see by what happened in Waragna's son's time at the bloody and fatal battle of Banja.

THE next affair that called the attention of government, was a complaint brought by the monks of Magwena, a ridge of rocks of but small extent not far from Tcherkin, the estate of Kasmati Netcho. These mountains, for a great part of the year, almost calcined under a burning sun, have, in several months, violent and copious showers of rain, which, received in vast caves and hollows of the mountain, and out of the reach of evaporation, are means of creating and maintaining all sorts of verdure and all scenes of pleasure, in the hot season of the year, when the rains do not fall elsewhere; and as the rocks have a considerable elevation above the level of the plain, they are at no season infected with those feverish disorders that lay the low country waste.

NETCHO was a man of pleasure, and he thought, since the monks, by retiring to rocks and deserts, meant thereby to subject themselves to hardship and mortification, that these delightful and flowery scenes, the groves of Magwena, were much more suited to the enjoyment of happiness with the young and beautiful Ozoro Esther, than for any set of men, who by their austerities were at constant war with the flesh. Upon these principles, which it would be very difficult for the monks themselves to refuse, he took possession of the mountain Magwena, and of those bowers
that,

that, though in possession of saints, did not seem to have been made for the solitary pleasures of one sex only. This piece of violence was, by the whole body of monks, called Sacrilege. Violent excommunications, and denunciations of divine vengeance, were thundered out against Kasmati Netcho. An army was sent against him; he was defeated and taken prisoner, and confined upon a mountain in Wal-kayt, where soon after he died, but not before the Iteghè had shewn her particular mark of displeasure, by taking her daughter Ozoro Esther, his wife, from him, that she, too, and her only son Confu, might not be involved in the monk's excommunications, and the imputed crime of sacrilege.

AT this time died Kasmati Waragna, full of years and glory, having, though a stranger, preserved his allegiance to the last, and more than once saved the state by his wisdom, bravery, and activity. He is almost a single example in their history, of a great officer, governor of a province, that never was in rebellion, and a remarkable instance of Bacuffa's penetration, who, from a single conversation with him, while engaged in the vilest employment, chose him as capable of the greatest offices, in which he usefully served both his son and grandson.

SOON after, Ayo governor of Begemder, an older officer still than Waragna, arrived in Gondar, and resigned his government into the queen's hands. This resignation was received, because it was understood that it was directly to be conferred upon his son Mariam Barea, by far the most hopeful young Abyssinian nobleman of his time. Another mark of favour, soon followed, perhaps was the occasion of this.

Ozoro

Ozoro Esther, the very young widow of Netcho, was married, very much against her own consent, to the young governor of Begemder, and this marriage was crowned with the universal applause of court, town, and country; for Mariam Barea possessed every virtue that could make a great man popular; and it was impossible to see Ozoro Esther, and hear her speak, without being attached to her for ever after.

STILL the complaint remained, that there was no promotion, no distinction of merit, but through some relation to the queen-mother; and the truth of this was soon so apparent, and the discontent it occasioned so universal, that nothing but the great authority Ras Welled de l'Oul, the Iteghe's brother, possessed, could hinder this concealed fire from breaking out into a flame.

THE queen, mother to Joas, was Ozoro Wobit, a Galla. Upon Joas's accession to the throne, therefore, a large body of Galla, said to be 1200 horse, were sent as a present to the young king as the portion of his mother. A number of private persons had accompanied these; part from curiosity, part from desire of preferment, and part from attachment to those that were already gone before them. These last were formed into a body of infantry of 600 men, and the command given to a Galla, whose name was Woosheka; so that the regency, in the person of the queen, seemed to have gained fresh force from the minority of the young king Joas, as yet perfectly subject to his mother.

THERE were four bodies of household troops absolutely devoted to the king's will. One of these, the Koccob horse,

was commanded by a young Armenian not 30 years of age. He had been left in Abyssinia by his father in Yafous's time, and care had been taken of him by the Greeks. Yafous had distinguished him by several places while a mere youth, and employed him in errands to Mafuah and Arabia, by which he became known to Ras Michael. Upon the death of Yafous, the Iteghè put him about her grandson Joas, as Baalomal, which is, *gentleman of the bed-chamber*, or, *companion to the king*. He then became Asaleffa el Camisfa, which means *groom of the stole*, but at last was promoted to the great place of Billetana Gueta Dakakin, *chamberlain*, or *master of the housebold*, the third post in government, by which he took place of all the governors of provinces while in Gondar.

THERE is no doubt Joas would have made him Ras, if he had reigned as long as his father. Besides his own language, he understood Turkish, Arabic, and Malabar, and was perfect master of the Tigre. But his great excellence was his knowledge of Amharic, which he was thought to speak as chafely and elegantly as Ras Michael himself. He is reported likewise to have possessed a species of jurisprudence, whence derived I never knew, which so pleased the Abyssinians, that the judges often requested his attendance on the king; at which time he sat at the head of the table, where it is supposed the king would place himself did he appear personally in judgment, (which, as it may be learned from divers places in this history, he never does); certain mornings in the week, therefore, he sat publicly in the market-place, and gave judgment soon after the break of day.

I saw this young man with his father at Loheia. He understood no European language; was just then returned from India, and had a considerable quantity of diamonds, and other precious stones, to sell. He spoke with tears in his eyes of Abyssinia, from which he was banished, and urged that I should take him there with me. But I had too much at stake to charge myself with the consequences of anybody's behaviour but my own, and therefore refused it.

The great favour the Galla were in at court encouraged many of their countrymen to follow them; and, by the king's desire, two of his uncles were sent for, and they not only came, but brought with them a thousand horse. These were two young men, brothers of the queen Wobit, just now dead. The eldest was named Brulhè, the younger Lubo. In an instant, nothing was heard in the palace but Galla. The king himself affected to speak nothing else. He had entirely intrusted the care of his person to his two uncles; and, both being men of intrigue, they thought themselves sufficiently capable to make a party, support it, and place the king at the head of it; and this they effected as soon as it was conceived, whilst the Abyssinians saw, with the utmost detestation and abhorrence, a Gallan and inimical government erected in the very heart or metropolis of their country.

WOODAGE had been long governor of Amhara. He had succeeded Palambaras Duré in Bacuffa's time, when he had been promoted to the dignity of Ras.

THESE two were heads of the only great families in Amhara, who took that government as it were by rotation. Woodage, in one of the excursions into Atbara, had made an Arab's, or a Shepherd's daughter, prisoner, baptized her, and lived with her as his mistress. The passion Woodage bore to this fair slave was not, however, reciprocal. She had fixed her affections upon his eldest son, and their frequent familiarities at last brought about the discovery. This very much shocked Woodage; but, instead of having recourse to public justice, he called his brothers, and some other heads of his family before him, and examined into the fact with them, desiring his son to defend himself. The crime was clearly proved in all its circumstances. Upon which Woodage, by his own authority, condemned his son to death; and not only so, but caused his sentence to be put in execution, by hanging the young man over a beam in his own house. As for the slave, he released her, as not being bound to any return of affection to him, from whom she had only received evil, and been deprived of her natural liberty.

It seems this claim of *patria potestas* was new in Abyssinia; and Bacuffa took it so ill, that he deprived Woodage of his office, and banished him to Amhara, then governed by Palambaras Durè. To this loss of influence another circumstance contributed. He was a relation of Yafous's first wife, who, by the Iteghé's intrigues, had been sent with her two sons to the mountain of Wechné, and Joas, a young son of Yafous, preferred in their places.

It happened that Palambaras Durè died; and as the succession fell regularly upon the unpopular Woodage, the king's uncle, Lubo obtained a promise of the government

of Amhara for himself. All Gondar was shocked at this strange choice; Amitzo and his Edjow were already upon the southern frontiers of that province, domiciled there; and there was no doubt but this nomination would put Amhara into his possession for ever. All the inhabitants of Gondar were ready to run to their arms to oppose this appointment of the king; and it was thought that, underhand, the Iteghè fomented this dissatisfaction. The king, however, terrified by the violent resentment of the populace, at the instance of Ras Welled de l'Oul, recalled his nomination.

At this time Michael, who saw the consequence of these disputes, but abstained from taking any share, because he knew that both parties were promoting his interest by their mutual animosity, came to Gondar in great pomp, upon an honourable errand.

BAADY, son of l'Oul, king of Funge, or, as they are called in the Abyssinian annals, Noba *, who had defeated Yafous at Sennaar, after a tyrannical and bloody reign of thirty-three years, was deposed in the 1764 by Nasser his son, whom his minister Shekh Adelan, with his brother Abou Kalec, governor of Kordofan, had put in his place; and Baady had fled to Suhul Michael, whose fame was extended all over Atbara. Michael received him kindly, promised him his best services with Joas, and that he would march in person to Sennaar, and reinstate him with an army, if the king should so command.

MICHAEL

* Noba, in the language of Sennaar, signifies Soldier; it is probably from this the ancient name of Nubia first came.

MICHAEL conducted him into the presence of the king, where, in a manner unbecoming a sovereign, and which Joas's successor would not have permitted, he kissed the ground, and declared himself a vassal of Abyssinia. The king assigned him a large revenue, and put him in possession of the government of Ras el Feel upon the frontier of Sennaar, where Ras Welled de l'Oul advised him to wait patiently till the dissensions that then prevailed at court were quieted, when Michael should have orders to reinstate him in his kingdom. This was a wise counsel, but he to whom it was given was not wise, and therefore did not follow it. After some short stay at Ras el Feel he was decoyed from this place of refuge by the intrigues of Adclan, and brought to trust himself in Atbara, where he was betrayed and taken prisoner by Welled Hassen, Shekh of Teawa, and murdered by him in Teawa privately, as we shall hereafter see, two years after his flight from Gondar.

At this time, Ras Welled de l'Oul's death was a signal for all parties to engage. Nothing had withheld them but his prudence and authority; and from that time began a scene of civil blood, which has continued ever since, was in its full vigour at the time when I was in Abyssinia, and without any prospect that it would ever have an end.

THE great degree of power to which the brothers and their Galla arrived; the great affection the king shewed to them, owing to their having early infected him with their bloody and faithless principles, gave great alarm to the queen and her relations, whose influence they were every day diminishing. The last stroke, the death of Welled de l'Oul, seemed to be a fatal one, and to threaten the
 I entire

entire dissolution of her power. In order to counterbalance this, they associated to their party and council Mariam Barea, who had lately married Ozoro Esther, and was in possession of the second province in the state for riches and for power, and greatly increased in its importance by the officer that commanded it. Upon the death of Welled de l'Oul, the principal fear the party of the Galla had was, that Mariam Barca should be brought to Gondar as Ras. The union between him and Kasmati Eshtë, formerly as strong by inclination as now it was by blood, put them in terror for their very existence, and a stroke was to be struck at all hazards that was to separate these interests for ever.

ESHTE, upon taking possession of the province of Damot, found the Djawi, established upon the frontiers of the province, very much inclined to revolt. Notwithstanding peace had been established among the Agows ever since Nanna Georgis had been defeated at the last battle, the Galla had still continued to rob and distress them, contrary to the public faith that had been pledged to them.

ESHTE was too honest a man to suffer this; but the truth was, the Djawi had felt the advantage of having a man like the late Waragna governor of Damot; and they wanted, by all means, to reduce the ministers to the necessity of making that command hereditary in his family, by Fasil his son being preferred to succeed him.

THIS Fasil, whom I shall hereafter call Waragna Fasil, a name which was given to distinguish him from many other Fasils in the army, was a man then about twenty-two, whom

Eshtë

Eshtë had kept about him in a private station, and had lately given him a subaltern command among his own countrymen, the Djawi of Damot. From the services that he had then rendered, it was expected a greater preferment was to follow.

THE insolence of the Djawi had come to such a pitch that they had offered Eshtë battle; but they had fled with very little resistance, and been driven over the Nile to their countrymen whence they came. Eshtë, roused from his indolence, now shewed himself the gallant soldier that he really was. He crossed the Nile at a place never attempted before; and though he lost a considerable number of men in the passage, yet that disadvantage was more than compensated by the advantage it gave him of falling upon the Galla unexpectedly. He therefore destroyed, or dispersed several tribes of them, possessed himself of their crops, drove off their cattle, wives, and children, and obliged them to sue for peace on his own terms; and then repassed the Nile, re-establishing the Djawi, after submission, in their ancient possessions.

UPON news of Welled de l'Oul's death, and the known intention of the queen that Eshtë should succeed him in the office of Ras, he was mustering his soldiers to march to Gondar: Damot, the Agows, Goutto, and Maitsha, all readily joined him from every quarter; and Waragna Fasil had been sent to bring in the Djawi with the rest. Eshtë had marched by slow journeys from Burè, slenderly attended, to arrive at Goutto the place of rendezvous; and, being come to Fagitta, in his way thither, he encamped upon a plain there, near to the church of St George.

It was in the evening, when news were brought him that the whole Djawi had come out, to a man, from goodwill, to attend him to Gondar. This mark of kindness had very much pleased him; and he looked upon it as a grateful return for his mild treatment of them after they were vanquished. A stool was set in the shade, without a small house where he then was lodged, that he might see the troops pass; when Hubna Fasil, a Galla, who commanded them, availing himself of the privilege of approaching near, always customary upon these occasions, run him through the body with a lance, and threw him dead upon the ground. The rest of the Galla fell immediately upon all his attendants, put them to flight, and proclaimed Waragna Fasil governor of Damot and the Agows.

This intelligence was immediately sent to their countrymen, Brulhè and Lubo, at Gondar, who prevailed upon the king to confirm Waragna Fasil in his command, though purchased with the murder of the worthiest man in his dominions, who was his own uncle, brother to the Ieghè; and this was thought to more than counterbalance the accession of strength the queen's party had received from the marriage of Ozoro father with Mariam Barea.

In critical times like these, the greatest events are produced from the smallest accidents. Ayo, father to Mariam Barea, had always been upon bad terms with Michael. It was at first emulation between two great men; but, after Ayo had assisted the king in taking Michael prisoner at the mountain Samayat, this emulation had degenerated into perfect hatred on the part of Michael.

Just before Kasmari Ayo had resigned Begemder to his son, and retired to private life, two servants of Michael had fled with two swords, which they used to carry before him, claiming the protection of Kasmari Ayo. Michael had claimed them before the king, who, loath to determine between the two, not being at that time infligated by Galla, had accepted the proposal of Michael to have the matter of right tried before the judges; but, upon his resignation of the province, and retiring, the thing had blown over and been forgotten.

Soon after this accession of Mariam Barea, Michael intimated to him the order the king had given that the judges should try the matter of difference between them. Mariam Barea refused this, and upbraided Michael with meanness and prostitution of the dignity he bore, to consent to submit himself to the venal judgment of weak old men, whose consciences were hackneyed in prejudice or partiality, and always known to be under the influence of party. He put Suhul Michael in mind also, that, being both of them the king's lieutenant-generals, representatives of his person in the provinces they governed, noble by birth, and soldiers by profession, they had no superior but God and their sovereign, therefore it was below them to acknowledge or receive any judgment between them unless from God, by an appeal to the sword, or from the king, by a sentence intimated to them by a proper officer; that Suhul Michael might choose either of these manners of deciding the difference as should seem best unto him; and if he chose the latter, of abiding by the sentence of the king, he would then restore him the swords upon the king's first command, but he despised the judges, and disowned their jurisdiction.

THIS.

THIS spirited answer was magnified into the crime of disobedience and rebellion. Michael pursued it no further. He knew it was in good hands, which, when once the matter was set agoing, would never let it drop. Accordingly, to every one's surprise but Michael's, a proclamation was made, that the king had deprived Mariam Barea of his government for disobedience, and had given it to Kasmati Brulhé his uncle, now governor of Begemder.

ALL Abyssinia was in a ferment at this promotion. The number, power, and vicinity of that race of Galla being considered, this was but another way of giving the richest and strongest barrier of Abyssinia into the hands of his hereditary and bloody enemy. There could be no doubt, indeed, but that, as soon as Brulhé should have taken possession of his government, it would be instantly over-run by the united force of that savage and Pagan nation; and there was nothing afterwards to avert danger from the metropolis, for the boundaries of Begemder reach within a very short day's journey of Gondar.

MARIAM BAREA, one of the noblest in point of birth in the country where he lived, setting every private consideration aside, was too good a citizen to suffer a measure so pernicious to take place quietly in his time, while the province was under his command. But, besides this, he considered himself as degraded and materially hurt both in honour and in interest, and very sensibly felt the affront of being, himself and his kindred, subjected to a race of Pagans whom he had so often overthrown in the field.

THE king's army marched, under the command of his uncle Brulhè, to take possession of his government; it was with much difficulty, indeed, that Joas could be kept from appearing in person, but he was left under the inspection and tuition of his uncle Lubo, at Gondar. Brulhè made very slow advances; his army several times assembled, as often disbanded of itself; and near a year was spent before he could move from his camp on the lake Tzana, with a force capable of shewing or maintaining itself in Begemder, from the frontiers of which he was not half a day's journey.

MARIAM BAREA remained all this time inactive in Begemder, attending to the ordinary duties of his office, with a perfect contempt of Brulhé and his proceedings. But, in the interim, he left no means untried to pacify the king, and dissuade him from a measure he saw would be ruinous to the state in general.

MARIAM BAREA, though young, had the prudence and behaviour of a man of advanced years. He was esteemed, without comparison, the bravest foldier and best general in the kingdom, except old Suhul Michael, his hereditary rival and enemy. But his manners were altogether different from those of Michael. He was open, chearful, and unre-served; liberal, even to excess, but not from any particular view of gaining reputation by it; as moderate in the use of victory as indefatigable to obtain it; temperate in all his pleasures; easily brought to forgive, and that forgiveness always sincere; a steady observer of his word, even in trifles; and distinguished for two things very uncommon in Abyssinia, regularity in his devotions, and constancy to one wife, which never was impeached. In his last remonstrance, af-
ter

ter many professions of his duty and obedience, he put the king in mind, that, at his investiture, “ The laws of
 “ the country imposed upon him an oath which he took
 “ in presence of his majesty, and, after receiving the holy
 “ sacrament, that he was not to suffer any Galla in Begem-
 “ der, but rather, if needed, die with sword in hand
 “ to prevent it; that he considered the contravening that
 “ oath as a deliberate breach of the allegiance which he
 “ owed to God and to his sovereign, and of the trust repo-
 “ sed in him by his country; that the safety of the princes
 “ of the royal family, sequestered upon the mountain of
 “ Wechné, depended upon the observance of this oath; that
 “ otherwise they would be in constant danger of being
 “ extirpated by Pagans, as they had already nearly been
 “ in former ages, at two different times, upon the rocks
 “ Damo and Gethen; he begged the king, if, unfortun-
 “ ly, he could not be reconciled to him, to give his com-
 “ mand to Kafmati Geta, Kafmati Eusebius, or any Abyf-
 “ finian nobleman, in which case he would immediately
 “ resign, and retire to private life with his old father.”

He concluded by saying, that, “ As he had formed a re-
 “ solution, he thought it his duty to submit it to the king;
 “ that, if his majesty was resolved to march and lead the army
 “ himself, he would retire till he was stopt by the frontiers of
 “ the Galla, and the farthest limits of Begemder; and, so far
 “ from molesting the army in their route, the king might
 “ be assured, that, though his own men should be straitened,
 “ abundance of every kind of provision and refreshment
 “ should be left in his majesty’s route. But if, contrary to
 “ his wish, troops of Galla, commanded by a Galla, should
 “ come to take possession of his province, he would fight
 “ them

“ them at the well of Fernay*, before one Galla should drink there, or advance a pike-length into Begemder.”

THIS declaration was, by orders of Ras Michael, entered into the Deftar, and written in letters of gold, after Mariam Barea's death, no doubt at the instigation of Ozoro Esther, jealous for the reputation of her dead husband. It is intitled, *the dutiful declaration of the governor of Begemder*; and is signed by two Umbares, or judges. Whether the original was so or not, I cannot say.

THE return made to this by the king was of the harshest kind, full of taunts and scoffs, and presumptuous confidence; announcing the speedy arrival of *Brulbé*, as to a certain victory; and, to shew what further assistance he trusted in, he ordered Ras Michael to be proclaimed governor of Samen, the province on the Gondar side of the Taccazzé, that no obstacle might be left in the way of that general from Tigrè, if it should be resolved upon to call him.

IN Abyssinia there is a kind of glass bottle, very light, and of the size, shape, and strength of a Florence wine-flask; only the neck is wider, like that of our glass decanters, twisted for ornament sake, and the lips of it folded back, such as we call cannon-mouthed. These are made at Trieste on the Adriatic; and thousands of packages of these are brought from Arabia to Gondar, where they are in use for all liquors, which are clear enough to bear the glass, such as wine and spirits. They are very thin

* A well near Karoota, immediately on the frontiers of Begemder.

thin and fragil, and are called *brulbé*. Mariam Barca, provoked at being so undervalued as he was in the king's message, returned only for answer, "Still the king had better take my advice, and not send his *brulbé's* here; they are but weak, and the rocks about Begemder hard; at any rate, they do right to move slowly, otherwise they might break by the way."

As soon as this defiance was reported to the king and his counsellors all was in a flame, and orders given to march immediately. The whole of the king's household, consisting of 8000 veteran troops, were ordered to join the army of Brulhè. This, tho' it added to the display of the army, contributed nothing to the real strength of it; for all, excepting the Galla, were resolved neither to shed their own blood nor that of their brethren, under the banners of so detested a leader.

THIS was not unknown to Mariam Barca; but neither the advantage of the ground, the knowledge of Brulhè's weakness, nor any other consideration, could induce him to take one step, or harrafs his enemy, out of his own province; nor did he suffer a musket to be fired, or a horse to charge, till Brulhè's van was drawn up on the brink of the well Fernay. After he had placed the horse of the province of Lasta opposite to the Edjow Galla, against whom his design was, the armies joined, and the king's troops immediately gave way. The Edjow, however, engaged fiercely and in great earnest with the horse of Lasta, an enemy fully as cruel and savage as themselves, but much better horsemen, better armed, and better soldiers. The moment the king's troops turned their backs, the trumpets from Mariam Barca's army forbade the pursuit; while the rest of the

Begemder horse, who knew the intention of their general, furrounded the Edjow, and cut them to pieces, though valiantly fighting to the last man.

BRULHE fell, among the herd of his countrymen, not distinguished by any action of valour. Mariam Barea had given the most express orders to take him alive ; or, if that could not be, to let him escape ; but by no means to kill him. But a menial servant of his, more willing to revenge his master's wrongs than adopt his moderation, forced his way through the crowd of Galla, where he saw Brulhè fighting ; and, giving him two wounds through his body with a lance, left him dead upon the field, bringing away his horse along with him to his master as a token of his victory. Mariam Barea, upon hearing that Brulhè was dead, forefaw in a moment what would infallibly be the consequence, and exclaimed in great agitation, " Michael and all the army of Tigre will march against me before autumn."

He was not in this a false prophet ; for no sooner was Brulhè's defeat and death known, than the king, from resentment, fear the fatal ruler of weak minds, the constant infliction of Lubo, and the remnant of Brulhè's party, declared there was no safety but in Ras Michael. An express was therefore immediately sent to him, commanding his attendance, and conferring upon him the office of Ras, by which he became invested with supreme power, both civil and military. This was an event Michael had long wished for. He had nearly as long foreseen that it must happen, and would involve both king and queen, and their respective parties, equally in destruction ; but he had not spent his

time merely in reflection, he had made every preparation possible, and was ready. So soon then as he received the king's orders, he prepared to march from Adowa with 26,000 men, all the best soldiers in Abyssinia, about 10,000 of whom were armed with firelocks.

It happened that two Azages, and several other great officers, were sent to him into Tigré with these orders, and to invest him with the government of Samen. Upon their mentioning the present situation of affairs, Michael sharply reflected upon the king's conduct, and that of those who had counselled him, which must end in the ruin of his family and the state in general. He highly extolled Mariam Barea as the only man in Abyssinia that knew his duty, and had courage to persevere in it. As for himself, being the king's servant, he would obey his commands, whatever they were, faithfully, and to the letter; but, as holding now the first place in council, he must plainly tell him the ruin of Mariam Barea would be speedily and infallibly followed by that of his country.

AFTER this declaration, Michael decamped with his army encumbered by no baggage, not even provisions, women, or tents, nor useless beasts of burden. His soldiers, attentive only to the care of their arms, lived freely and licentiously upon the miserable countries through which they passed, and which they laid wholly waste as if belonging to an enemy.

He advanced, by equal, steady, and convenient marches, in diligence, but not in haste. Not content with the subsistence of his troops, he laid a composition of money upon

all those districts within a day's march of the place through which he passed ; and, upon this not being readily complied with, he burnt the houses to the ground, and slaughtered the inhabitants. Woggora, the granary of Gondar, full of rich large towns and villages, was all on fire before him ; and that capital was filled with the miserable inhabitants, stripped of every thing, flying before Ras Michael as before an army of Pagans. The king's understanding was now restored to him for an instant ; he saw clearly the mischief his warmth had occasioned, and was truly sensible of the rash step he had taken by introducing Michael. But the dye was cast ; repentance was no longer in season ; his all was at stake, and he was tied to abide the issue.

MICHAEL, with his army in order of battle, approached Gondar with a very warlike appearance. He descended from the high lands of Woggora into the valleys which surround the capital, and took possession of the rivers Kahha and Angrab, which run through these valleys, and which alone supply Gondar with water. He took post at every entrance into the town, and every place commanding those entrances, as if he intended to besiege it. This conduct struck all degrees of people with terror, from the king and queen down to the lowest inhabitant. All Gondar passed an anxious night, fearing a general massacre in the morning ; or that the town would be plundered, or laid under some exorbitant ransom, capitation, or tribute.

BUT this was not the real design of Michael ; he intended to terrify, but to do no more. He entered Gondar early in the morning, and did homage to the king in the most respectful manner. He was invested with the charge of Ras by

Joas himself; and from the palace, attended by two hundred foldiers, and all the people of note in the town, he went straight to take possession of the house which is particularly appropriated to his office, and sat down in judgment with the doors open.

MARAUDING parties of soldiers had entered at several parts of the town, and begun to use that licence they had been accustomed to on their march, pilfering and plundering houses, or persons that seemed without protection. Upon the first complaints, as he rode through the town, he caused twelve of the delinquents to be apprehended, and hanged upon trees in the streets, sitting upon his mule till he saw the execution performed. After he had arrived at his house, and was seated, these executions were followed by above fifty others in different quarters of Gondar. That same day he established four excellent officers in four quarters of the town. The first was Kefla Yafous, a man of the greatest worth, whom I shall frequently mention as a friend in the course of my history; the second, Billetana Gueta Wellela Michael, that is, first master of the household to the king. He had given that old officer that office, upon superseding Lubo the king's uncle, without any consent asked or given. He was a man of a very morose turn, with whom I was never connected. The third was Billetana Gueta Tecla, his sister's son, a man of very great worth and merit, who had the soft and gentle manners of Amhara joined to the determined courage of the Tigran.

MICHAEL took upon himself the charge of the fourth district. He did not pretend by this to erect a military go-

vernment in Gondar; on the contrary, these officers were only appointed to give force to the sentences and proceedings of the civil judges, and had not deliberation in any cause out of the camp. But two Umbares, or judges, of the twelve were obliged to attend each of the three districts; two were left in the king's house, and four had their chamber of judicature in his.

THE citizens, upon this fair aspect of government, where justice and power united to protect them, dismissed all their fears, became calm and reconciled to Michael the second day after his arrival, and only regretted that they had been in anarchy, and strangers to his government so long.

THE third day after his arrival he held a full council in presence of the king. He sharply rebuked both parties in a speech of considerable length, in which he expressed much surprise, that both king and queen, after the experience of so many years, had not discovered that they were equally unfit to govern a kingdom, and that it was impossible to keep distant provinces in order, when they paid such inattention to the police of the metropolis. Great part of this speech applied to the king, who, with the Iteghè and Galla, were in a balcony as usual, in the same room, though at some distance, and above the table where the council sat, but within convenient hearing.

THE troubled state, the destruction of Woggora, and the insecurity of the roads from Damot, had made a famine in Gondar. The army possessed both the rivers, and suffered no supply of water to be brought into the town, but allow-

ed two jars for each family twice a-day, and broke them when they returned for more*.

RAS MICHAEL, at his rising from council, ordered a loaf of bread, a brulhè of water, and an ounce of gold, all articles portable enough to be exposed in the market-place, upon the head of a drum, without any apparent watching. But tho' the Abyssinians are thieves of the first rate, tho' meat and drink were very scarce in the town, and gold still scarcer, though a number of strangers came into it with the army, and the nights were almost constantly twelve hours long, nobody ventured to attempt the removing any of the three articles that, from the Monday to the Friday, had been exposed night and day in the market-place unguarded.

ALL the citizens, now surrounded with an army, found the security and peace they before had been strangers to, and every one deprecated the time when the government should pass out of such powerful hands. All violent oppressors, all those that valued themselves as leaders of parties, saw, with an indignation which they durst not suffer to appear, that they were now at last dwindled into absolute insignificance.

HAVING settled things upon this basis, Ras Michael next prepared to march out for the war of Begemder; and he summoned, under the severest penalties, all the great officers to attend him with all the forces they could raise. He
insisted

* This is commonly done in times of trouble, to keep the townsmen in awe, as if fire was intended, which would not be in their power to quench.

insisted likewise that the king himself should march, and refused to let a single soldier stay behind him in Gondar ; not that he wanted the assistance of those troops, or trusted to them, but he saw the destruction of Mariam Barea was resolved on, and he wished to throw the odium of it on the king. He affected to say of himself, that he was but the instrument of the king and his party, and had no end of his own to attain. He expatiated, upon all occasions, upon the civil and military virtues of Mariam Barea ; said, that he himself was old, and that the king should walk coolly and cautiously, and consider the value that officer would be of to his posterity and to the nation when he should be no more.

UPON the first news of the king's marching, Mariam Barea, who was encamped upon the frontiers near where he defeated Brulhé, fell back to Garraggara the middle of Begemder. The king followed with apparent intention of coming to a battle without loss of time ; and Mariam Barea, by his behaviour, shewed in what different lights he viewed an army, at the head of which was his sovereign, and one commanded by a Galla.

No such moderation was shewn on the king's part. His army burnt and destroyed the whole country through which they passed. It was plain that it was Joas's intention to revenge the death of Brulhé upon the province itself, as well as upon Mariam Barea. As for Ras Michael, the behaviour of the king's army had nothing in it new, or that could either surprize or displease him. Friend as he was to peace and good order at home, his invariable rule was to indulge his

his soldiers in every licence that the most profligate mind could wish to commit when marching against an enemy.

It was known the armies were to engage at Nefas Mufa, because Mariam Barea had said he would fight Brulhé, to prevent him entering the province, but retreat before the king till he could no longer avoid going out of it. The king then marched upon the tract of Mariam Barea, burning and destroying on each side of him, as wide as possible, by detachments and scouring parties. Allo Fasil, an officer of the king's household, a man of low birth, of very moderate parts, and one who used to divert the king as a kind of buffoon, otherwise a good soldier, had, as a favour, obtained a small party of horse, with which he ravaged the low country of Begemder.

THE reader will remember, in the beginning of this history, that a singular revolution happened, in as singular a manner, the usurper of the house of Zaguè having voluntarily resigned the throne to the kings of the line of Solomon, who for several hundred years had been banished to Shoa. Tecla Haimanout, founder of the monastery of Debra Libanos, a saint, and the last Abyssinian that enjoyed the dignity of Abuna, had the address and influence to bring about this revolution, or resignation, and to restore the ancient line of kings. A treaty was made under guarantee of the Abuna, that large portions of Lasta should be given to this prince of the house of Zaguè, free from all tribute, tax, or service whatever, and that he should be regarded as an independent prince. The treaty being concluded, the prince of Zaguè was put in possession of his lands, and was called Y'Lasta. Hatzè, which signifies, not the king of Lasta, but *the king* at

at or in Lafta*. He resigned the throne, and Icon Amlac of the line of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, continued the fucceffion of princes of that houfe.

THAT treaty, greatly to the honour of the contracting parties, made towards the end of the 13th century, had remained inviolate till the middle of the 18th; no affront or injuftice had been offered to the prince of Zagué, and in the number of rebellions which had happened, by princes fetting up their claims to the crown, none had ever proceeded, or in any fhape been abetted, by the houfe of Zagué, even though Lafta had been fo frequently in rebellion.

As Joas was a young prince, now for the firft time in the province of Begemder and paffing not far from his domains, the prince of Zaguè thought it a proper civility and duty to falute the king in his paffage, and congratulate him upon his acceffion to the throne of his father. He accordingly prefented himfelf to Joas in the habit of peace, while, according to treaty, his kettle-drums, or nagarcets, were filver, and the points of his guard's fpears of that metal alfo. The king received him with great cordiality and kindnefs; treated him with the utmoft refpect and magnificence; refufed to allow him to prostrate himfelf on the ground, and forced him to fit in his prefence. Michael went ftill farther; upon his entering his tent he uncovered himfelf to his wait, in the fame manner as he would have done in prefence of Joas. He received him ftanding, obliged him to fit in his
own

* Nearly the fame diftinction as the filly one made in Britain between the French king and king of France.

own chair, and excused himself for using the same liberty of sitting, only on account of his own lameness.

THE king halted one entire day to feast this royal guest. He was an old man of few words, but those very inoffensive, lively, and pleasant ; in short, Ras Michael, not often accustomed to fix on favourites at first sight, was very much taken with this Lasta sovereign. Magnificent presents were made on all sides ; the prince of Zagué took his leave and returned ; and the whole army was very much pleased and entertained at this specimen of the good faith and integrity of their kings.

HE had now considerably advanced through his own country, Lasta, which was in the rear, when he was met by Allo Fasil returning from his plundering the low country, who, without provocation, from motives of pride or avarice, fell unawares upon the innocent, old man, whose attendants, secure, as they thought, under public faith, and accoutred for parade and not for defence, became an easy sacrifice, the prince being the first killed by Allo Fasil's own hand.

FASIL continued his march to join the king, beating his silver kettle-drums as in triumph. The day after, Ras Michael, uninformed of what had passed, inquired who that was marching with a nagareet in his rear ? as it is not allowed to any other person but governors of provinces to use that instrument ; and they had already reached the camp. The truth was presently told ; at which the Ras shewed the deepest compunction. The tents were already pitched when Fasil arrived, who, riding into Michael's

tent, as is usual with officers returning from an expedition, began to brag of his own deeds, and upbraided Michael, in a strain of mockery, that he was old, lame, and impotent.

THIS raillery, though very common on such occasions, was not then in season; and the last part of the charge against him was the most offensive, for there was no man more fond of the sex than Michael was. The Ras, therefore, ordered his attendants to pull Fasil off his horse, who, seeing that he was fallen into a scrape, fled to the king's tent for refuge, with violent complaints against Michael. The king undertook to reconcile him to the Ras, and sent the young Armenian, commander of the black horse, to desire Michael to forgive Allo Fasil. This he absolutely refused to do, alledging, that the passing over Fasil's insolence to himself would be of no use, as his life was forfeited for the death of the prince of Zagué.

THE king renewed his request by another messenger; for the Armenian excused himself from going, by saying boldly to the king, That, by the law of all nations, the murderer should die. To the second request the king added, that he required only his forgiveness of his insolence to him, not of the death of the prince of Zagué, as he would direct what should be done when the nearest of kin claimed the satisfaction of retaliation. To this Ras Michael shortly replied, "I am here to do justice to every one, and will do it without any consideration or respect of persons." And it was now, for the first time, Abyssinia ever saw a king solicit the life of a subject of his own from one of his servants, and be refused.

THE king, upon this, ordered Allo Fasil to defend himself; and things were upon this footing, the affair likely to end in oblivion, though not by forgiveness. But, a very short time after, the prince of Zaguè's eldest son came privately to Michael's tent in the night; and, the next morning, when the judges were in his tent, Michael sent his door-keeper (Hagos) reckoned the bravest and most fortunate in combat of any private man in the army, and to whom he trusted the keeping of his tent-door, to order Allo Fasil to answer at the instance of the prince of Zaguè, then waiting him in court, Why he had murdered the prince his father? Fasil was astonished, and refused to come: being again cited in a regular manner by Hagos, he seemed desirous to avail himself of the king's permission to defend himself, and call together his friends. Hagos, without giving him time, thrust him through with a lance; then cut off his head, and carried it to Michael's tent, repeating what passed, and the reason of his killing him.

As a refusal in all such instances is rebellion, this had passed according to rule: a party of Tigrans was ordered to plunder his tent; and all the ill-got spoils which he had gained from the poor inhabitants of Begemder were abandoned to the soldiers. Fasil's head was given to the prince of Zaguè, as a reparation for the treaty being violated; the silver nagareet and spears were returned; and, highly as this affair had been carried by Ras Michael, the king never after mentioned a word of it. But this was universally allowed to be the first cause of their disagreement.

MARIAM BAREA, seeing no other way to save his province from ruin but by bringing the affair to a short issue, re-

solved likewise to keep his promise. He retired to Nefas Mufa, and encamped in the farthest limits of his province: behind this are the Woollo Galla, relations of Amitzo the king's parents. Joas and Ras Michael followed him without delay, and, having called in all the out-posts, both sides prepared for an engagement.

ABOUT nine in the morning, Mariam Barea presented his army in order of battle. Michael had given orders to Kefla Yafous and Welleta Michael how to form his. He then mounted his mule, and with some of his officers rode out to view Mariam Barea's disposition. The king, anxious about the fortune of the day, and terrified at some reports that had been made him, by timid or unskilful people, of the warlike countenance of Mariam Barea's army, sent to the Ras, whom he saw reconnoitring, to know his opinion of what was likely to happen. "Tell the king," says the veteran, "that a young man like him, fighting with a subject so infinitely below him, with an army double his number, should give him fair play for his life and reputation. He should send to Mariam Barea to encrease the strength of his center by placing the troops of Lafla there, or we shall beat him in half an hour, without either honour to him or to ourselves." The king, however, did not understand that sort of gallantry; he thought half an hour in suspense was long enough, and he ordered immediately a large body of musquetry to reinforce Fasil, who commanded the center, and thereby he weakened his own right wing.

MICHAEL, who commanded the right of the royal army, had placed himself and his fire-arms in very rough ground, where cavalry could not approach him, and where he fired

as from a citadel, and soon obliged the left wing of the rebels to retreat. But the king, Kefla Yafous, and Lubo on the right, were roughly handled by the horse of Lafta, and would have been totally defeated, the king and Lubo having already left the field, had not Kefla Yafous brought up a reinforcement of the men of Sirè and Temben, and retrieved the day, at least brought things upon an equal footing.

FASIL, with the horse of Foggora and Damot, and a prodigious body of the Djawi and Pagan Galla, desirous to shew his consequence, and confirm himself in his ill-got government by his personal behaviour, attacked the Begemder horse in the center so irresistibly, that he not only broke through them in several places, but threw the whole body into a shameful flight. Mariam Barca himself was wounded in endeavouring to stop them, and hurried away, in spite of his inclination, crying out in great agony, "Is there not one in my army that will stay and see me die like the son of Kasmati Ayo?" It was all in vain; Powussen, and a number of his own officers, surrounding him, dragged him as it were by force out of the field. The country behind Nefas Mufa is wild, and cut with deep gullies, and the woods almost impenetrable; they were therefore quickly out of the enemy's pursuit, and safe, as they thought, under the protection of the Woollo Galla. The whole army of Begemder was dispersed, and Michael early forbade further pursuit.

THE account of this battle, and what preceded it, from the murder of the prince of Zaguè, is not in the annals or history of Abyssinia, which I have hitherto followed; at least it has

has not appeared yet, probably out of delicacy to Ozoro Efther, fear of Ras Michael, and respect to the character of Mariam Barea, whose memory is still dear to his country. But the whole was often, at my desire, repeated to me by Kefla Yafous, and his officers who were there, whom he used to question about any circumstance he did not himself remember, or was absent from ; for he was a scrupulous lover of truth ; and nothing pleased him so much as the thought that I was writing his history to be read in my country, although he had not the smallest idea of England or its situation.

As for the conversation before the battle, it was often told me by Ayto Aylo and Ayto Engedan, sons of Kasmati Efhté, who were with the Ras when he delivered the message to the king, and were kept by him from engaging that day in respect to Mariam Barea, who was married to their aunt Ozoro Efther.

THE king and Lubo sent Woofheka to their friends among the Woollo, who delivered up the unfortunate Mariam Barea, with twelve of his officers who had taken refuge with him. Mariam Barea was brought before the king in his tent, covered with blood that had flowed from his wound ; his hands tied behind his back, and thus thrown violently with his face to the ground. A general murmur which followed shewed the sentiments of the spectators at so woful a sight ; and the horror of it seemed to have seized the king so entirely as to deprive him of all other sentiments.

I HAVE often said, the Mosaical law, or law of retaliation, is constantly observed over all Abyssinia as the criminal law of the country, so that, when any person is slain wrongfully by another, it does not belong to the king to punish that offence, but the judges deliver the offender to the nearest relation of the party murdered, who has the full power of putting him to death, selling him to slavery, or pardoning him without any satisfaction.

LUBO saw the king relenting, and that the greatest crime, that of rebellion, was already forgiven. He stood up, therefore, and, in violent rage, laid claim to Mariam Barea as the murderer of his brother: the king still saying nothing, he and his other Galla hurried Mariam Barea to his tent, where he was killed, according to report, with sundry circumstances of private cruelty, afterwards looked upon as great aggravations. Lubo, with his own hand, is said to have cut his throat in the manner they kill sheep. His body was afterwards disfigured with many wounds, and his head severed and carried to Michael, who forbade uncovering it in his tent. It was then sent to Brulhe's family in their own country, as a proof of the satisfaction his friends had obtained; and this gave more universal umbrage than did even the cruelty of the execution.

SEVERAL officers of the king's army, seeing the bloody intentions of the Galla, advised Powussen, and the eleven other officers that were taken prisoners, to make the best use of the present opportunity, and fly to the tent of Michael and implore his protection. This they most willingly did, with the connivance of Woolheka, who had been intrusted with the care of them, and Lubo having

finished

finished Mariam Barea, came to the king's tent to seek the unhappy prisoners, whom he intended as victims to the memory of Brulhè likewise. Hearing, however, that they were fled to Michael's tent, he sent Woofheka to demand them; but that officer had scarce opened his errand, in the gentlest manner possible, when Michael, in a fury, cried out, Cut him in pieces before the tent-door. Woofheka was indeed lucky enough to escape; but we shall find this was not forgot, for his punishment was more than doubled soon afterwards.

At seeing Mariam Barea's head in the hands of a Galla, after forbidding him to expose it in his tent, Michael is said to have made the following observation: "Weak and cowardly people are always in proportion cruel and unmerciful. If Brulhè's wife had done this, I could have forgiven her; but for Joas, a young man and a king, whose heart should be opened and elated with a first victory, to be partaker with the Galla, the enemies of his country, in the murder of a nobleman such as Mariam Barea, it is a prodigy, and can be followed by no good to himself or the state; and I am much deceived if the day is not at hand when he shall curse the moment that ever Galla crossed the Nile, and look for a man such as Mariam Barea, but he shall not find him." And, indeed, Michael was very well entitled to make this prophecy, for he knew his own heart, and the designs he had now ready to put in execution.

It is no wonder that these free communications gave the king reason to distrust Michael. And it was observed that Waragna Fasil had insinuated himself far into his favour: his late behaviour at the battle of Nefas Mufa had

greatly increased his importance with the king; and the number of troops he had now with him made Joas think himself independent of the Ras. Fasil had brought with him near 30,000 men, about 20,000 of whom were horsemen, wild Pagan Galla, from Bizamo and other nations south of the Nile. The terror the savages occasioned in the countries through which they passed, and the great disorders they committed, gave Ras Michael a pretence to insist that all those wild Galla should be sent back to their own country. I say this was a pretence, because Michael's soldiers were really more cruel and licentious, because more confident and better countenanced than these strangers were. But the war was over, the armies to be disbanded, these Pagans were consequently to return home; and they were all sent back accordingly, excepting 12,000 Djawi, men of Fasil's own tribe, and some of the best horse of Maitsha, Agow, and Damot. •

THIS was the first appearance of quarrel between Fasil and Ras Michael. But other accidents followed fast that blew up the flame betwixt them; of which the following was by much the most remarkable, and the most unexpected.

AT Nefas Musa, near to the field of battle, was a house of Mariam Barea, which he used to remove to when he was busy in wars with the neighbouring Galla. It was surrounded with meadows perfectly well-watered; and full of luxuriant grass. Fasil, for the sake of his cavalry, had encamped in these meadows; or, if he had other views, they are not known; and though all the doors and entrances of the house were shut, yet within was the unfortunate

Ozoro Esther, by this time informed of her husband's death, and with her was Aytô Aylo, a nobleman of great credit, riches, and influence. He had been at the campaign of Sennaar, and was so terrified at the defeat, that, on his return, he had renounced the world, and turned monk. He was a man of no party, and refused all posts or employments; but was so eminent for wisdom, that all sides consulted him, and were in some measure governed by him.

THIS person, a relation of the Iteghé's, had, at her desire, attended Ozoro Esther to Nefas Musa, but, adhering to his vow, went not to battle with her husband. Hearing, however, of the bad disposition of the king, the cruelty of the Galla, and the power and ambition of Fasil, whose soldiers were encamped round the house, he told her that there was only one resolution which she could take to avoid sudden ruin, and being made a sacrifice to one of the murderers of her husband.

THIS princess, under the fairest form, had the courage and decision of a Roman matron, worthy the wife of Mariam Barea, to whom she had born two sons. Instructed by Aylo, early in the morning, all covered from head to foot, accompanied by himself, and many attendants and friends, their heads bare, and without appearance of disguise, they presented themselves at the door of Michael's tent, and were immediately admitted. Aylo announced the princess to the Ras, and she immediately threw herself at his feet on the ground.

As Michael was lame, tho' in all other respects healthy and vigorous, and unprepared for so extraordinary an interview,

it was some time before he could get upon ~~his~~ feet and uncover himself before his superior. This being at last accomplished, and Ozoro Esther ~~refusing~~ to rise, Aylo, in a few words, told the Ras her resolution was to give him instantly her hand, and throw herself under his protection, as that of the only man not guilty of Mariam Barea's death, who could save her and her children from the bloody cruelty and insolence of the Galla that surrounded her. Michael, sanguine as he was in his expectations of the fruit he was to reap from his victory, did not expect so soon so fair a sample of what was to follow.

To decide well, instantly upon the first view of things, was a talent Michael possessed superior to any man in the kingdom. Tho' Ozoro Esther had never been part of his schemes, he immediately saw the great advantage which would accrue to him by making her so, and he seized it; and he was certain also that the king, in his present disposition, would soon interfere. He lifted Ozoro Esther, and placed her upon his seat; sent for Kefla Yafous and his other officers, and ordered them, with the utmost expedition, to draw up his army in order of battle, as if for a review to ascertain his loss. At the same time he sent for a priest, and ordered separate tents to be pitched for Ozoro Esther and her household. All this was performed quickly; then meeting her with the priest, he was married to her at the door of his own tent in midst of the acclamations of his whole army. The occasion of these loud shouts was soon carried to the king, and was the first account he had of this marriage. He received the information with violent displeasure, which he could not stifle, or refrain from expressing it in the severest terms, all of which were carried to Ras Michael by officious

persons, almost as soon as they were uttered, nothing softened.

THE consequences of the marriage of Ozoro Esther were very soon seen in the inveterate and determined hatred against the Galla. Esther, who could not save Mariam Barea, sacrificed herself that she might avenge his death, and live to see the loss of her husband expiated by numberless hecatombs of his enemies and murderers. Mild, gentle, and compassionate as, from my own knowledge, she certainly was, her nature was totally changed when she cast back her eyes upon the sufferings of her husband; nor could she be ever satiated with vengeance for those sufferings, but constantly stimulated Ras Michael, of himself much inclined to bloodshed, to extirpate, by every possible means, that odious nation of Galla, by whom she had fallen from all her hopes of happiness.

FASIL, as being a Galla, the first man that broke thro' the horse of Begemder, and wounded and put to flight her husband Mariam Barea, was in consequence among the black list of her enemies. Fasil, too, had murdered Kasmati Eshté, who was her favourite uncle, fast friend to Mariam Barea, and the man that had promoted her marriage with him.

THE great credit of Fasil with the king had now given Ras Michael violent jealousy. These causes of hatred accumulated every day, so that Michael had already formed a resolution to destroy Fasil, even though the king should perish with him. In these sentiments, too, was Gussho of Amhara, a man of great personal merit, of whose father, Ras Woodage, we have already spoken, who had filled successive-

by all the great offices in the last reign. He was immensely rich; had married a daughter of Ras Michael, and afterwards six or seven other women, being much addicted to the fair sex, and was lately married to Ozoro Wellela Israel, the Iteghé's daughter. Nor was he in any shape an enemy to wine; but very engaging, and plausible in discourse and behaviour; in many respects a good officer, careful of his men, but said to be little solicitous about his word or promise to men of any other profession but that of a soldier.

An accident of the most trifling kind brought about an open breach between the king and the Ras, which never after was healed. The weather was very hot while the army was marching. One day, a little before their arrival at Gondar, in passing over the vast plain between the mountains and the lake Tzana, (afterwards the scene of much bloodshed) Ras Michael, being a little indisposed with the heat, and the sun at the same time affecting his eyes, which were weak, without other design than that of shading them, had thrown a white cloth or handkerchief over his head. This was told the king, then with Fasil in the center, who immediately sent to the Ras to inquire what was the meaning of that novelty, and upon what account he presumed to cover his head in his presence? The white handkerchief was immediately taken off, but the affront was thought so heinous as never after to admit of atonement.

It must be here observed, that, when the army is in the field, it is a distinction the king uses, to bind a broad fillet of fine muslin round his head, which is tied in a double knot, and hangs in two long ends behind. This, too, is worn by the governor of a province when he is first introduced
into

into it; and, in absence of the king, is the mark of supreme power, either direct or delegated, in the person that wears it.

UNLESS on such occasions, no one covers his head in presence of the king, nor in sight of the house or palace where the king resides: But it was not thought, that, being at such a distance in the rear, he was in the king's presence, nor that what was caused by infirmity was to be construed into presumption, or weighed by the nice scale of jealous prerogative.

THE armies returned to the valleys below Gondar, and encamped separately there, Fasil upon the river Kahha, and Ras Michael on the Angrab. Gusho was on the right of Michael and left of Fasil, a little higher up the Kahha, near Kofcam, the Iteghè's palace; but he was on the opposite side of the river from Fasil, where he had a house of his own, and several large meadows adjoining. Gusho's servants and soldiers now began cutting their master's grass, and were soon joined by a number of Fasil's people, who fell, without ceremony, to the same employment. An interruption was immediately attempted, a fray ensued, and several were killed or wounded on both sides, but at last Fasil's people were beat back to their quarters.

GUSHO complained to Ras Michael of this violation of his property; and he being now in Gondar, and holding the office of Ras, was, without doubt, the superior and regular judge of both, as they were both out of their provinces, and immediately in Michael's. Upon citation, Fasil declared that he would submit to no such jurisdiction; and,

and, the case being referred to the judges next day, it was found unanimously in council, that Ras Michael was in the right, and that Fasil was guilty of rebellion. A proclamation in consequence was made at the palace-gate, superseding Fasil in his government of Damot, and in every other office which he held under the king, and appointing Boro de Gago in his place, a man of great interest in Damot and Gojam, and with the Galla on both sides of the Nile, and married to a sister of Kasmati Eshté's, by another mother, otherwise a man of small capacity.

FASIL, after a long and private audience of the king in the night, decamped early in the morning with his army, and sat down at Azazo, the high road between Damot and Gondar, and there he intercepted all the provisions coming from the southward to the capital.

It happened that the house in Gondar, where Ras Michael lived, was but a small distance from the palace, a window of which opened so directly into it, that Michael, when sitting in judgment, could be distinctly seen from thence. One day, when most of his servants had left him, a shot was fired into the room from this window of the palace, which, though it missed Michael, wounded a dwarf, who was standing before him fanning the flies from off his face, so grievously, that the page fell and expired at the foot of his master. This was considered as the beginning of the hostilities. Nobody knew from whose hand the shot came; but the window from which it was aimed sufficiently shewed, that if it was not by direction, it must at least have been fired with the knowledge of the king.

JOAS lost no time, but removed and encamped at Tadda, and sent Woosheka to Michael with orders to return to Tigre, and not to see his face; and, at the same time, declared Lubo governor of Begemder and Amhara. The Ras scarcely could be brought to see Woosheka; but did not deign to give any further answer than this, "That the king should know, that the proper persons to correspond with him as Ras, upon the affairs of the kingdom, were the judges of the town, or of the palace; not a slave like Woosheka, whose life, as well as that of all the Gallas in the king's presence, was forfeited by the laws of the land. He cautioned him from appearing again in his presence, for if he did, that he should surely die."

THE next day a message came from the king, by four judges, forbidding the Ras again to drink of either the Angrab or the Kalha, but to strike his tents and return to Tigre upon pain of incurring his highest displeasure.—To this Michael answered, "That, true it was, his province was Tigre, but that he was now governor of the whole realm; that he was an extraordinary officer, called to prevent the ruin of the country, because, confessedly, the king could not do it; that the reason of his coming existed to that day; and he was very willing to submit it to the judges for their solemn opinion, whether the kingdom, at present in the hands of the Galla, was not in more danger from the power of those Galla than it was from the constitutional influence of Mariam Barea. He added, that he expected the king should be ready to march against Fasil, for which purpose he was to decamp on the morrow." The king returned an absolute refusal to march: The Ras thereupon made proclamation for all the Galla, of every denomination,

mination to leave the capital, the next day, upon pain of death, declaring them outlawed, and liable to be slain by the first that met them, if, after twenty-four hours, they were found in Gondar or its neighbourhood, or, after ten days, in any part of the kingdom. After this, accompanied by Gusho, he decamped to dislodge Fasil from the strong post which he held at Azazo.

By the king's refusal to march with Ras Michael in person, it was supposed that his household troops would not join, but remain with him to garrison his palace. Joas, however, was too far decided in favour of Fasil to remain neuter. Michael had encamped the 21st of April in the evening, on the side of the hill above Azazo, in very rough and rocky ground, as unfavourable for Fasil's horse as the slope it had was favourable for Michael's musquetry.

THE battle was fought on the 22d in the morning, and there was much blood shed for the time that it lasted. A nephew of Michael, and his old Fit-Auraris, Netcho, were both slain, and Fasil was totally defeated. The Galla, who had come from the other side of the Nile, were very much terrified at Michael's fire-arms, which contained what they called the zibib, or grape, meaning thereby the ball. Fasil retired quickly to Damot, to increase and collect another army again, and to try his fortune after the rains.

It happened, unfortunately, that among the prisoners taken at Azazo were some of the king's black horse. These being his slaves, and subject only to his commands, sufficiently shewed by whose authority they came there. They were, therefore, all called before Michael; two of them were

first interrogated, whether the king had sent them or not? and, upon their denying or refusing to give an answer, their throats were cut before their companions. The next questioned was a page of the king, who seeing, from the fate of his friends, what was to follow his denial, frankly told the Ras, that it was by the king's special orders they, and a considerable body of the household troops, had joined Fasil the night before; and further, that it was the Armenian, who, by the king's order, had fired at him, and killed the dwarf who was fanning the flies from him.

UPON this information all the prisoners were dismissed. The army returned the same night to Gondar, and, though they had been fasting all day, a council was held, which sat till very late, at the rising of which a messenger was dispatched to Wechné for Hatzé Hannes, who was brought to the foot of the mountain the next day. In the same night Shalaka Becro, Nebrit Tecla and his two sons, Lika Netcho and his two sons, and a monk of Tigre, called Welleta Christos, were sent to the palace to murder the king, which they easily accomplished, having found him alone. They buried him in the church of St Raphael, as we shall find from the regicide's own confession, when he was apprehended, when we shall relate the particulars.

At the same time Michael exhibited a strange contrast in his behaviour to the Armenian, who had fled to the house of the Abuna for refuge. He sent and took him thence, and banished him from Abyssinia, but so considerately, that he dispatched a servant with him to Masuah to furnish him with necessaries, to see him embark, and save him from the cruelty and extortions of the Naybe.

HANNES



HANNES II.

1769.

*Hannes, Brother to Bacuffa, chosen King---Is brought from Wechné---
Crowned at Gondar---Refuses to march against Fasil---Is poisoned
by Order of Ras Michael.*

HANNES, a man past seventy years of age, made his entry into Gondar the 3d of May 1769. He was brother to Bacuffa, and having in his time escaped from the mountain, and being afterwards taken, his hand was cut off by order of the king his brother, and he was sent back to the place of his confinement.

It is a law of Abyssinia, as we have already observed, derived from that of Moses, that no man can be capable either of the throne or priesthood, unless he be perfect in all his limbs; the want of a hand, therefore, certainly disqualified Hannes, and it was with that intent it had been cut off. When this was objected to him in council, Michael laughed violently, and turned it into ridicule; "What is it that a king has to do with his hands? Are you afraid he shall not be able to saddle his own mule, or load his own bag-

“ gage? Never fear that ; when he is under any such difficulty, he has only to call upon me *, and I will help him.”

HANNES, besides his age, was very feeble in body ; and having had no conversation but with monks and priests, this had debilitated his mind as much as age had done his body. He could not be persuaded to take any share in government. The whole day was spent in psalms and prayers ; but Ras Michael had brought from the mountain with him two sons, Tecla Haimanout the eldest, a prince of fifteen years of age, and the younger, called George, about thirteen,

GUEBRA DENGHEL, a nobleman of the first family in Tigré had married a daughter of Michael by one of his wives in that province. By her he had one daughter, Welleta Selassé, whom Michael in the beginning, while Joas and he were yet friends, had destined to be queen, and to be married to him. Hannes was of the age only to need a Shunnamite ; and Welleta Selassé, young and beautiful, and who merited to be something more, was destined as this sacrifice to the ambition of her grandfather. A kind of marriage, I believe, was therefore made, but never consummated. She lived with Hannes some months in the palace, but never took any state upon her. She was a wife and a queen merely in name and idea. Love had in that frozen composition as little share as ambition, and those two great temptations,

* What made the ridicule here was, Michael was older than the king, and could not stand alone.

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

temptations, a crown and a beautiful mistress; could not animate Hatzé Hannes to take the field to defend them. Every possible method was taken by Michael to overcome his reluctance, and do away his fears. All was vain; he wept, hid himself, turned monk, demanded to be sent again to Wechné, but absolutely refused marching with the army.

MICHAEL, who had already seen the danger of leaving a king behind him while he was in the field, and finding Hannes inexorable, had recourse to poison, which was given him in his breakfast, and the Ras, by this means, in less than six months became the deliberate murderer of two kings.



TECLA HAIMANOUT II.

1769.

Succeeds his Father Hannes—His Character and prudent Behaviour—Cultivates Michael's Friendship—Marches willingly against Fasil—Defeats him at Fagitta—Description of that Battle.

TECLA HAIMANOUT succeeded his father. He was a prince of a most graceful figure, tall for his age, rather thin, and of the whitest shade of Abyssinian colour, such are
all

all those princes that are born in the mountain. He was not so dark in complexion as a Neapolitan or Portugueze, had a remarkably fine forehead, large black eyes, but which had something very stern in them, a straight nose, rather of the largest, thin lips, and small mouth, very white teeth and long hair. His features, even in Europe, would have been thought fine. He was particularly careful of his hair, which he dressed in a hundred different ways. Though he had been absent but a very few months from his native mountain, his manners and carriage were those of a prince, that from his infancy had sat upon an hereditary throne. He had an excellent understanding, and prudence beyond his years. He was said to be naturally of a very warm temper, but this he had so perfectly subdued as scarcely ever to have given an instance of it in public. He entered into Ras Michael's views entirely, and was as forward to march out against Fasil, as his father had been averse to it.

FROM the time of Hannes's accession to the throne, Tecla Haimanout called Michael by the name of Father, and during the few slight sicknesses the Ras had, he laid by all his state, and attended him with an anxiety well becoming a son. At this time I entered Abyssinia, and arrived in Ma-suah, where there was a rumour only of Hatzé Hannes's illness.

THE army marched out of Gondar on the 10th of November 1769, taking the route of Azazo and Dingleber. Fasil was at Buré, and had assembled a large army from Damot, Agow, and Maitsha. But Welleta Yafous, his principal officer, had brought together a still larger one, from the wild nations of

Galla beyond the Nile, and this not without some difficulty. The zibib, or bullet, which had destroyed so many of them at Azazo, had made an impression on their minds, and been reported to their countrymen as a circumstance very unpleasing. These wild Pagans, therefore, had, for the first time, found a reluctance to invade their ancient enemies the Abyssinians.

FASIL, to overcome this fear of the zibib, had loaded some guns with powder, and fired them very near at some of his friends, which of course had hurt nobody. Again he had put ball in his gun; and fired at cattle afar off; and these being for the most part slightly wounded, he inferred from thence that the zibib was fatal only at a distance, but that if they galloped resolutely to the mouth of the gun, the grape could do no more than the first gun he fired with powder had done to those he had aimed at.

As soon as Fasil heard that Michael was on his march, he left Burè and advanced to meet him, his wish being to fight him if possible, before he should enter into those rich provinces of the Agows, from whence he drew the maintenance of his army, and expected tribute. Michael's conduct warranted this precaution. For no sooner had he entered Fasil's government, than he laid waste all Maitsha, destroying every thing with fire and sword. The old general indeed being perfectly acquainted with the country, and with the enemy he was to engage, had already fixed upon his field of battle, and measured the stations that would conduct him thither.

INSTEAD of taking up the time with spreading the desolation he had begun, after the first two days, by forced marches he came to Fagitta, considerably earlier than Fafil expected. This field that Michael had chosen, was rocky, uneven, and full of ravines in one part, and of plain smooth turf on the other, which divisions were separated by a brook full of large stones.

THE Nile was on Ras Michael's left, and in this rugged ground he stationed his lances and musquetry; for he never made great account of his horse. Two large churches, St Michael and St George, planted thick with cedars, and about half a mile distant from each other, were on his right and left flanks, or rather advanced farther before his front. A deep valley communicated with the most level of these plains, descending gently all the way from the celebrated sources of the Nile, which were not more than half a day's journey distant. Michael drew up his army behind the two churches, which were advanced on his right and left flanks, and among the cedars of these he planted 500 musqueteers before each church, whom the trees perfectly concealed; he formed his horse in front, knowing them to be an object the Galla did not fear, and likely to lead them on to charge rashly. These he gave the command of to a very active and capable officer, Powussen of Begemder, one of those eleven servants of Mariam Barea, whose lives Michael saved, by protecting them in his tent after the battle of Nefas Musa. He had directed this officer, with a few horse, to scour the small plain, as soon as he saw the Galla advancing into it from the valley.

As soon as the sun became hot, Fasil's wild Galla poured into the plain, and they had now occupied the greatest part of it, which was not large enough to contain his whole army, when their skirmishing began by their driving Powussen before them, who fled apparently in great confusion, crossed the brook, and joined the horse, and formed nearly between the churches. The Galla, desirous to pursue, were impeded by the great stones, so that they were in a crowd at the passage of the brook.

AYTO WELLETA GABRIEL, factor to Ozoro Esther, was intoxicated with liquor, but he was a brave man, very active and strong, and of a good understanding, though, according to a custom among them, he, at times, to divert the Ras, played the part of a buffoon. In this character, with his musquet only in his hand, he, though on foot, skirmished in the middle of a party of Powussen's horse. When they turned to fly, Welleta Gabriel found it convenient to do so likewise, and he crossed the brook without looking behind him. Upon turning round, he saw the Galla halt, as if in council, in the bed of the rivulet, and taking up his gun as a bravado, he levelled at the crowd, and had the fortune to hit the principal man among them, who fell dead among the feet of the horses.

A small pause ensued; the cry of the Zibib! the Zibib! immediately began, and a downright confusion and flight followed. The Galla, already upon the plain, turned upon these coming out of the valley, and these again upon their companions behind them. The cry of Zibib Ali*! Zibib

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Ali!

* They have the grape along with them.

Ali! was repeated through the whole, spreading terror and dismay wherever it was heard. Nobody knew what was the misfortune that had befallen them. Welleta Yafous, who commanded the van, was carried away by the multitude flying: Fasil, who was at the head of the Damot and Agows, had not entered the valley, nor could any one tell him what was the accident in the plain.

Even Michael himself, (as I have heard him say) when, sitting upon his mule on a small eminence, he saw this extraordinary confusion and retreat, was not able to assign any cause for it. Though no man on these occasions had more presence of mind, he remained for a time motionless, without giving any orders. The troops, however, that lay hid in the groves of cedars before the churches, who had been silent and attentive, and Pownussen, who commanded the horse which had been skirmishing, saw distinctly the operation of Welleta Gabriel, and the confusion that had followed it; without loss of time they attacked the Galla in the valley, and were soon joined by Gusho and the rest of the army.

FASIL, in despair at a defeat of which he knew not the cause, came down among the Galla, fighting very bravely, often facing about upon those that pressed them, and endeavouring at least to retreat in some sort of order; but the musqueteers from the church, commanded by Hezekias, instead of entering the valley, had advanced and ascended the hills, so that from the sides of them, in the utmost security, they poured down shot upon the fliers beneath them.

FASIL here lost a great part of his army; but seeing a place in one of the hills accessible, he left the valley, and ascended the side of the mountain, leading a large body of his own troops; and, having gained the smooth ground behind the musqueteers, he came up with them, whilst intent only upon annoying the Galla, and cut 300 to pieces. Content with this advantage, and finding his army entirely dispersed, he passed the sources of the Nile at Geesh, descended into the plain of Affoa, and encamped near Gooderoo, a small lake there, intending to pass the night, and collect his scattered forces.

MICHAEL's army had given over pursuit, but Powussen, with some chosen horse of Lasta and Begemder, followed Fasil upon his track, and came up with him a little before the dusk of the evening, on the side of the lake. Here a great slaughter of wounded and weary men ensued: Fasil fled, and no resistance was attempted, and the soldiers, satiated with blood, at last returned, and pursued the enemy no further.

It was the next day in the evening before Powussen joined the camp, having put to the sword, without mercy, all the stragglers that fell in the way upon his return. The appearance of this man and his behaviour made Michael's joy complete, who already had begun to entertain fears, that some untoward accident had befallen him.

THIS was the battle of Fagitta, fought on the 9th of December 1769, on the very ground in which Fasil, just five years before, had murdered Kasmati Eshté. Those philosophers, who disclaim the direction of a divine Providence,

will calculate how many chances there were, that, in a kingdom as big as Great Britain, the commission of a crime and its punishment should both happen in one place, on one day, in the short space of five years, and in the life of one man.

THE extraordinary severity exercised upon the army of the Galla, after the battle, was still as apparent as it had been in the flight. Woosheka, of whom we have had already occasion to speak, fell in among the horse of Powuffen and Gusho, and being known, his life was spared. He was cousin-german to Lubo, but a better man and soldier than his relation, and, in all the intrigues of the Galla at Gondar, was considered as an undesigning man, of harmless and inoffensive manners. He had been companion of Gusho, and many of the principal commanders in the army, and, after the defeat at Nefas Mufsa, had the guard of Powuffen and the eleven officers, whom he suffered to escape into Michael's tent, as I have already said, while Lubo was murdering Mariam Barea. He had been, for a time, well-known and well esteemed by Ras Michael, nor was he ever supposed personally to have offended him, or given umbrage to any one. As he was a man of some fortune and substance, it was thought the forfeiture of all that he had, more than atone for any fault that he had ever committed.

It was therefore agreed on the morning after Powuffen's return from the pursuit, that Gusho and he, when they surrendered this prisoner, should ask his life and pardon from the Ras, and this they did, prostrating themselves in the humblest manner with their foreheads on the earth. Ras Michael,

Michael, at once forgetting his own interest, and the quality and consequence of the officers before him, fell into a violent and outrageous passion against the supplicants, and, after a very short reproof, ordered each of them to their tents in a kind of disgrace.

He then sternly interrogated Woosheka, whether he did not remember that, at Tedda, he had ordered him out of the country in ten days? then, in his own language of Tigré, he asked, if there was any one among the soldiers that could make a leather bottle? and being answered in the affirmative, he ordered one to be made of Woosheka's skin, but first to carry him to the king. The soldiers understood the command, though the miserable victim did not, and he was brought to the king, who would not suffer him to speak, but waved with his hand to remove him; and they accordingly carried him to the river side, where they flayed him alive, and brought his skin stuffed with straw to Ras Michael.

It was not doubted that Ozoro Esther, then in the camp, had sealed the fate of this wretched victim. She appeared that night in the king's tent dressed in the habit of a bride, which she had never before done since the death of Mariam Barea. Two days after, having obtained her end, she returned triumphant to Gondar, where Providence visited her with distress in her own family, for the hardness of her heart to the sufferings of others.

DURING this time I was at Masuah, where, by reason of the great distance and interruption in the roads, these transactions

actions were not yet known. Hatzé Hannes was still supposed alive, and my errand from Metical Aga that of being his Physician. I shall now begin an account of what passed at Masuah, and thence continue my journey to Gondar til my meeting with the King there.

~~END OF THE SECOND VOLUME~~

